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The Autobiography
of a Criminal

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

LIFE, ADVENTURES, TRAVELS AND SUFFERINGS

OF

HENRY TUFTS,

NOW RESIDING AT

LEMINGTON,

IN THE DISTRICT OF MAINE.

IN SUBSTANCE, AS COMPILED FROM HIS OWN MOUTH.

Ab ovo usque ad mala.

OVID.

Meliora video, proboque, deteriora sequor.

IDEM.

ENTERED AS THE ACT DIRECTS.

DOVER, N. H.
PRINTED BY SAMUEL BRAGG, JUN.

1807.

Title page of the original edition

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CRIMINAL

HENRY TUFTS

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY

EDMUND PEARSON

DUFFIELD AND COMPANY
NEW YORK CITY—1926

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Introduction

THIS is probably the first extensive American criminal biography. It heads a line of books which come down to our own time, including such works as *The Autobiography of a Thief* by Hutchins Hapgood, and the stories of bandits from Jesse James to Gerald Chapman. Like practically all of them, it is the work of a "ghost writer," and that fact is frankly admitted on the original title-page.

The first, and—so far as I know—only other edition, was printed in Dover, New Hampshire, by Samuel Bragg, Jr., in 1807. The original title was "A Narrative of the Life, Adventures, Travels and Sufferings of Henry Tufts, Now Residing at Lemington, in the District of Maine. In Substance, as Compiled from his Own Mouth."

Writers who mention Henry Tufts are few, and, for the most part, they follow his narrative and believe his assertions. One of them makes an original contribution, and it is important.

The Rev. James Hill Fitts, in his *History of Newfields, New Hampshire*, accepts Thomas Tufts, the clerical grandfather, the Bachelor of Arts of Harvard, who was born in Devonshire, and died as a preacher of the gospel in Boston, leaving a name free from reproach. He ac-

cepts, also, the son of this man, the blameless tailor, who was the father of Henry. Only in one detail does he depart from the author's description of his own family, and it is in respect to the tailor's wife. Henry Tufts speaks of both his parents with filial piety, but the Rev. Mr. Fitts says of Mrs. Tufts, Henry's mother, that she was known, later in life, " as an old witch woman."

We need go no further, nor engage in other speculation. If the mother of Henry Tufts did, in truth, enter into a compact with the Father of Evil, everything is explained. We see at once how useless were the efforts of the army of constables, sheriffs, jailers, magistrates and attorneys—constituting the forces of righteousness—who, throughout his career, tried to bring over to the side of the angels this person who was so irrevocably enlisted as a follower of the Black Man.

An elder brother of Henry Tufts, in a literary sense, might be seen in the "Notorious Stephen Burroughs." Both Tufts and Burroughs were born in New Hampshire; both had dealings in counterfeit money; both had unhappy meetings with Judge Robert Treat Paine and Attorney-General Sullivan of Massachusetts. Both had unpleasant recollections of Castle Island and Major Perkins. Burroughs studied at Dartmouth College; Tufts gave it his blessing as he passed by.

It is unnecessary, however, to think of Burroughs as the inspirer of this book. Tufts was entreated by a publisher, from Newburyport, as early as 1794,—or four years

prior to the first appearance of the *Memoirs* of Burroughs. The literary success of the notorious Stephen hung fire until 1810 (three years after Tufts had gone into print) when there appeared the second edition of Burroughs,—the beginning of the popularity which has called for editions down to 1924.

Tufts has had to wait one hundred and twenty-three years for this, his second edition, but it is possible that his first appearance, in 1807, led to the numerous early reprints of Burroughs in the State of New York, where they are notoriously more godless. New Hampshire promptly shut down upon Tufts: the printing office which issued this book was burned, three or four years later, and the printer died of a broken heart. A manifest judgment. Moreover, persons of the name of Tufts bought as many copies of this book as they could find, and destroyed them.

Henry Tufts had a successor, if not imitator, in Seth Wyman (1784-1843.) This man was another autobiographical burglar from New Hampshire, who wandered through some of Tufts' favorite towns, engaged in robbery and passing counterfeit money. His *Life and Adventures,* published in Manchester, N. H., in 1843, seems like a rather tame copy of the narrative of Tufts.

Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson was the discoverer of Tufts, in our time. His essay, "A New England Vagabond," in *Harper's Magazine* for March, 1888 (reprinted in his *Travellers and Outlaws,* 1889) is by far

the best estimate of the book. Colonel Higginson chose Tufts' description of Indian life; his encounter with the dealer in Continental counterfeit money; his high-flown style, and use of odd slang; and his picture of the underworld of the Revolutionary period, as the strong points of the narrative.

"Of course," wrote Colonel Higginson, "it is easy to say that he lied; that probability must steadily be kept in view at every page: but the general atmosphere of a book is unmistakable, and here the coarse verisimilitude is very great."

To the remarkable features of the book, cited by Colonel Higginson, I should add its understanding of the criminal mind. Tufts' lively self-pity is characteristic; he was indignant at the discomfort of the jails,—although he did bear, with little complaint, the brutal floggings.

Nothing is more delicious than the wrath of Tufts at Dr. Rand, for stealing his best suit of clothes, after they had escaped from the jail at Newburyport. Contrast it with Tufts' satisfaction at the much dirtier trick which he had played, when he took Smith's *only* suit, and departed, leaving his fellow prisoner, deceived and stark naked, in "that most odious of tenements," Exeter jail.

The anecdote of the dog, stolen and re-stolen, and sold three times in one day; the religious awakening brought about in Canterbury by playing upon "three pompion vines"; and the devout lady pilgrim who expected, in some mysterious fashion, to earn a needed half-dollar at

a "New Light" meeting, are among the lighter charms of the story.

For its darker side, there is his tale of cannibalism, as practiced at the Stone Tavern, near Poughkeepsie.

We have one description of the physical appearance of Henry Tufts. On August 26, 1793, at Dover, Theophilus Dame, Sheriff, gave notice that "the noted Henry Tufts broke out of gaol on the night of the 25th." He had been "confined for his old offence, that is teft" [sic] and is "about six feet high, and forty years of age, wears his own hair, short and dark colored, had on a long blue coat." Five dollars reward was offered for his arrest.*

Colonel Higginson's statement about the death of Tufts is this:

"He died, it is said, at Limington, Maine, January 31, 1831, in the eighty-third year of an uncommonly misspent life."

Mr. Wadleigh, in the book just quoted, writes that he "died in Maine, about the year 1825, under an assumed name."

Limington has almost completely forgotten Henry Tufts. It is a pretty village, although its many scattered and deserted farms make it seem a melancholy one. A few of the older residents, especially those of the name of Tufts, recall that they have heard their fathers speak of the author. They remember him as "the Doctor."

* George Wadleigh. *Notable Events in the History of Dover, N. H.* (Dover, 1913.)

They have heard of a book (the first edition of this book) and may have heard of a man, "over in Gorham," or somewhere, who once owned a copy. But that is all.

For a few moments I thought that perhaps I was standing at the grave of the Doctor, himself, and in the presence of one of his direct descendants. But when the moss and mold were rubbed off the headstone, the Christian name was another's, and the descendant, as I had been told he was, made no claim to a literary ancestry. I did not venture to accuse him, directly.

Sheriff Dame's notice; the mention of Tufts in the New Hampshire *Provincial Papers* at the time of his military service (see note, p. 97) and one other entry, in the same records, are nearly all the contemporary references which I have found. In the *Provincial Papers* (30:82) Henry Tufts, and "henry Tufts junr" (our man) sign the "association paper" as of the town of Lee. This was an adherence to the Declaration of Independence.

His trial for burglary at Ipswich earned him three short notices in the *Salem Gazette*: June 24, July 1, and September 16, 1794. The Court, and other, records of this case are quoted in an extended note at the end of this edition. (Page 347.)

Tufts' book was strongly disapproved by one of Dover's historians: Miss Mary P. Thompson, in her *Landmarks in Ancient Dover*. It was Miss Thompson who wrote (in 1892) that, within her recollection, it was common, by way of expressing superlative wickedness, to say "as big a

liar (or thief, etc., etc.) as old Hen Turf." She added that the cellar of the house where Tufts had lived, between Durham and Lee, was still to be traced.

Miss Thompson doubted if Colonel Higginson's praise of the work was deserved, and uttered her condemnation, in vigorous language, of any who could enjoy it. She was careful to indicate that she had never even looked at it.

Such disapproval, from a lady who had been, I am told, a member of a sisterhood of the Church of Rome, left me somewhat abashed. It is not through any wish to hide behind the coats of clerical gentlemen, but simply to make proper acknowledgments, that I say that it was through two of the ministers of the First Religious Society (Unitarian), of Newburyport, that I was introduced to Henry Tufts. My friend, Laurence Hayward, it was, who first showed me the essay by Colonel Higginson. And the Colonel, the fighting parson of the Civil War, was Mr. Hayward's predecessor in the same pulpit, in my grandfather's time.

As to the actual author of the book, the "ghost writer," who is indicated on the title-page, one name and one anonymous person have been suggested. Mr. Wadleigh ascribes the writing to Major Thomas Tash of New Durham. A penciled note in the copy of the book, in The New York Public Library, quotes "David Murray in the News Letter" as saying that it was written "by ——— Tash of New Durham." Miss Thompson rejects the claims of Tash, and suggests "a clever young lawyer of

Dover." This sounds like the first line of a limerick, but is not otherwise helpful.

Allibone's *Critical Dictionary of English Literature* and Williamson's *Bibliography of Maine* mention the narrative; other bibliographies know it not. Even Professor F. W. Chandler's *Literature of Roguery* missed it. The copy in the Boston Public Library contains an inscription on a fly-leaf, which pretends to quote a notice from *The Critical Review* (London) for March, 1808. I shall be glad if some one can find that the *Review* did mention the book. I could not.

I have either seen or heard of nine copies, in various public or semi-public libraries. *American Book Prices Current* records the sale of a copy, in 1916 for $8, but the price has advanced, and last year copies were quoted at from $25 to $35.

In this edition, titles for the chapters have been inserted, and the text has been cut to the extent of about forty pages. The original edition runs to 366 pages, with a preface. The preface, which adds nothing to our knowledge of Tufts or his book, has been omitted altogether. The other omissions are wholly in the interest of brevity. The book has not been bowdlerized in any place: Tufts is allowed to recite his crimes, and smugly describe his lechery without interference.

My acknowledgments for help in preparing this edition are due to my friend, Ernest Foss, Esq., who searched the legal records; to the librarians at the New York His-

torical Society; and to Messrs. L. Nelson Nichols and John B. Elliott of The New York Public Library.

I am also indebted for information and assistance to Mr. Robert K. Shaw, librarian of the Public Library at Worcester, Mass., Mr. Charles Evans, of Chicago, author of *American Bibliography*; Mr. Clarence S. Brigham, librarian of the American Antiquarian Society; Miss Elizabeth R. Frost of Dover, N. H.; The Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Archives Division; Miss Evelyn McWhinnie, librarian of the Public Library of Newmarket, N. H.; Mr. E. F. Walbridge, librarian of the Harvard Club of New York; Mr. George Francis Dow; and Miss Ethel Wyatt Devin of the Public Library of Dover.

The early woodcuts appearing on the half-title pages are reproduced through the courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Edmund Pearson.
New York, 1930.

BOOK ONE

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CRIMINAL*

Chapter I

OF POOR BUT HONEST PARENTS

Nor birth nor parentage, or mean, or great,
Confers protection from the stroke of fate.

BEFORE proceeding with my own journal, it may be requisite to premise, for the sake of those personally acquainted with me, the little I know of my paternal ancestors, beginning with my grandfather, Thomas Tufts; for further than him my researches have never ascended. He was born, as I have been told, in Devonshire, in England; but whether he descended from honorable or mean parentage is the least of my concern, nor can I give any account. Certain, however, it is, he was a worthy and pious man; but not relishing his situation in England, he early availed of a transatlantic passage, bid farewell to his native shore, and emigrated to Boston in New England; his circumstances, however, I imagine, were not greatly advanced by the removal.

As nature had endowed him with a literary propensity, he now soon commenced, under the auspices of a few

* A few obvious misprints, in the original text, have been corrected. For the most part, the spelling, punctuation, etc., of the first edition has been followed.—*E.P.*

friends, an academical course of study, finishing his education at the university of Cambridge; whence he was dismissed with the honors of a bachelor's degree. In process of time he became an ordained minister in Boston, and continued in his vocation, as a preacher of the gospel in that town, till the time of his decease, which happened in the year 1725; leaving a good report behind, and a name free from reproach.*

Besides other issue, he left a son, named Henry, whom, under providence, I acknowledge as the author of my existence.

As my grandfather's condition in life was by no means affluent, the chief he had been able to do for his son Henry, my father, was to place him an apprentice to one Witcher, a tailor, living in Boston. This man he faithfully served till twenty-one years of age, when, becoming his own master, he tarried not long at Boston, but removed to Newmarket, in New Hampshire, where he married a woman, whose maiden name was Wedgwood. In the course of two or three years, he left Newmarket, and resided at Lee, an adjacent town, where finding himself more eligibly situated, he gave over the thoughts of further removal, and was shortly in a condition to purchase a small farm, by help of which, and his trade, as a tailor, he acquired no disreputable livelihood.

* Harvard Quinquennial Catalogue mentions two of the name Thomas Tufts. The B. A. of 1701, who died 1733, seems the candidate for the honor of being grandfather of Henry Tufts.—*E.P.*

He died in the seventy-sixth year of his age, two years subsequent to the death of my mother, and the testimony of a good conscience, (I make no doubt) followed them both to their graves. They left behind four children, to imitate, (if so inclined) the example of a life dedicated to religion and virtue. The above summary comprises such particulars respecting my pedigree, as I judge of sufficient consequence to be here inserted; I add, therefore, no more, but hasten to the recital of my own story.

I, was born at Newmarket, in the State of New Hampshire, on the 24th day of June, A. D. 1748. My infantile years exhibited none of those characteristic marks of a depraved disposition, which were so fully developed in my riper manhood. Seeing therefore the following account is little other than a detail of the crimes I have committed, and of the frauds and impositions I have practiced upon others, I shall pass over that period in silence, as requiring no especial notice in these memoirs.

Happy, doubtless I might have considered myself, had the whole term of my past existence been spent in equal innocency with the first fourteen years of it; for then, in all probability, I had never experienced those rugged trials, or those bitter sufferings, which have since checkered my unpleasant journey through life. But lasting happiness was not in store for me, but ills in succession, sufficient to embitter by far the greater number of my days.

When I was about the age just mentioned the bent of

my genius began to display itself; since at such an early stage, I exhibited numerous indications of that natural propensity to theft, for which I was so distinguished in after periods, that my name became proverbial.

My first efforts of this nature, were confined to the pilfering of apples, pears, cucumbers, and other fruits of the earth, indiscriminately, in which species of depredation I sometimes showed greater ingenuity, than was commonly to be met with in so juvenile a practitioner. After a while, growing more bold and hardened in the ways of misdoing, my thefts were of a different description and greater magnitude; as a specimen of which the following may here suffice in lieu of more examples.

Being at a neighbor's house, one day, I chanced to espy, in the hands of the mistress, a paper money bill, which was deposited anon in the corner of her cupboard, as a place of imagined security. The enticing appearance of the bill, and the beautiful pictures and flourishes that adorned it, had fixed my attention and captivated my childish fancy. I had heard, too, that the value of such money was equal to the like sum in silver. Enough this, to make me covet the treasure, and lay some little stratagem for its attainment. I did so; and was successful in its removal, unnoticed by the family. Soon, however, the woman missed her bill, when calling to mind, that none else had been present, she placed her suspicions upon me. To know the certainty of the matter, and recover her property, if possible, she repairs straightway to

my father's dwelling, who being informed of particulars, had the culprit forthcoming with a vengeance. At first I stiffly disclaimed all knowledge of the fact, but my accusers being strenuous, and myself unable to repel their arguments, I was brought, at last, to confess the fault, and restore the bill to its rightful owner.

At the unlucky termination of this my first *coup d'essay*, at genuine theft, my feelings were not a little mortified, since the untoward affair was soon blazed abroad, and brought me to open disgrace. Even my playmates, as well as others, at every little miff, would cast it full in my teeth. The former petty robberies, which I had committed, occasionally, upon the nuts, apples, or fruits of the neighboring farmers, had been passed over as a trick of youth, and as matters of trivial import, in comparison of this. But my last scandalous offense was construed to announce a vicious and depraved disposition, which, might ripen into an aptitude for the perpetration of the worst of crimes.

Observations of this sort I could hear resounding from different quarters, and was thereupon led into a series of reflections, upon the subject of theft and its consequences. My reveries were directed, however, to unprofitable objects, for instead of contemplating aright upon the doctrines of *meum* and *tuum*, as of age to have done in some measure; instead of considering the sanctity of individual property; weighing the vile and mercenary nature of my transgressions, or guarding against a further

repetition of them, my mind was principally employed in adjusting the degrees of impunity, which might, or might not attend, the commission of such deeds in future.

Ideas of this kind were my frequent concomitants; and such is the prevalency of habit, that it naturally begets a mental alliance in its favor; an inclination in the human breast to cherish familiar objects, whether their complexion be virtuous or vicious, beautiful or deformed. The above remarks were applicable to myself at this period, for the longer I digested the above subjects, the more I became attached to favorite irregularities, and more strongly inclined to provide means for their gratification.

Such being my case I gave into the indulgence of corrupt appetites, and commenced a career of filching such small articles, as chance flung in my way. Success and safety generally attended those clandestine enterprises, as I had learned already the necessity of caution, and used to secrete each article till it might be disposed of to proper advantage.

One affair took place about this time, which I recollect the more especially, as the tumult it made in the neighborhood, was a fruitful source of uneasiness to my feelings. Happening to pass, one day, through an adjacent field, in the season of reaping grain, I casually came across a sickle; the opportunity was inviting, and the temptation too strong for resistance. I took it; but having no immediate use for utensils of this stamp, concealed it, for the present, in a thick cluster of bushes. The

owner, who had a suspicious temper of his own, soon wanting a sickle, and thinking me, of course the transgressor, came in a furious rage to my father's habitation, and charged me with the theft. I denied the accusation with assurance, insomuch that the old gentleman, after broaching many invectives, and chafing himself to no purpose, was obliged to forego the bootless pursuit, and submit, though against his *grain*, to my escaping with impunity. After the round of a year I reclaimed the sickle, and converted it to my own emolument. . . .

Chapter II

EARLY IN SIN

To my new optics novel scenes arise,
And furnish copious matter for surprise.

WHEN I was about sixteen years of age an occurrence happened, which well might have ended my days, and so have prevented the further career, both of my follies and sufferings on this sublunary stage. While returning home one Sunday, from meeting, I chanced to be overtaken by an impetuous thunderstorm. No house being near, I ran, with several others, for shelter, under a tall spreading pine, situate by the wayside, on a Mr. Neal's land. The violence of the tempest soon increased, and the low hung clouds, surcharged with the watery element, poured down their torrents of rain, and emitted, in quick succession, horrid flashes of lightning, accompanied with loud peals of thunder. By and by, a sudden flash, falling with terrific glare, struck the tree under which we were standing, and split it into myriads of pieces. A wooden tempest of splinters, which in fact darkened the air, flew off from the tree, as its center, in every direction, and overspread the earth at considerable distance. With consternation and surprise we saw the lightning running in streams upon the drenched ground.

All were greatly dismayed at the severity of the shock; but as good fortune, or good providence would have it, none of us received the least corporal injury from the explosion.

Much about this time I went down into a deep, old well, for the purpose of cleaning it out; there tarrying full three hours, and, having completed the task, I ascended, and, horrible to relate! had freed myself from the dismal cavity scarcely a minute, when the loose rocks suddenly gave way, and, with a mighty crash, filled the whole void in an instant. At this astonishing spectacle my hair stood on end, to think how narrowly I had escaped destruction by being buried in the ruins. Thus is man obnoxious ever to the stroke of fate! thus is he liable to many latent, impending dangers, which human prudence can neither foresee nor prevent! ! !

A while after the happening of these accidents, which made indeed but a transient impression on my mind, I laid a scheme, in concert with two other young fellows of my own standing to steal some bread and cheese, and at the same time, to rob a cucumber yard, owned by one Stevens, a steady old farmer. My two accomplices, not being versant in exploits of this kind, were both extremely timid and doubtful, as to the issue of the enterprise, and, when the case came really in hand, one of them declined entering the yard at all, by reason it was contiguous to the mansion of the proprietor. To induce our dispensing with his farther attendance, he offered to procure the

bread and cheese, as he said he could take those articles from his own father's house. On condition of his so doing, we agreed to excuse him, and he set out for home accordingly. In the meantime the other youngster and myself (it being now late in the evening) ventured into the yard and stripped the vines of as many cucumbers as we could well carry away. We all three met again, the same evening, at a preconcerted place of rendezvous, when, to our transport, it appeared that our pusillanimous companion had made shift to acquire half a loaf of bread, and a large cheese weighing fourteen pounds. We all sat down in order to commence a pleasing repast; but the thought struck my fancy, that I should much rather have the whole plunder to myself, than to share it in partnerships with my associates. No sooner did the idea enter my imagination, than slyly I took up a small pebble, threw it at one of my messmates, and with it hit him on the back. He was much started at the stroke, as not knowing from what quarter it proceeded; while I also pretending to be panic-struck, jumped up, exclaiming, with affected surprise, "they are coming in pursuit of us." We all instantly took to our heels, myself in a different route from the other two, but they sped only a small distance; wherefore least they should find out the mistake, and return, I counterfeited a variety of strange voices; at the hearing of which the young novices were so sadly frighted, that they scampered away home as fast as their legs would carry them, adventuring no more

back for the night. In a few minutes I returned to the cheese and cucumbers, and conveyed the whole away to a place of better security. The next day, meeting with the two young chaps, I told them, that, in trying to escape the night before, I had been unluckily overtaken by old Stevens, who found also and took possession of our booty, and besides threatened me so harshly that I was obliged to promise him three days work to compromise the affair. The young lads readily swallowed this fictitious account, and were very well pleased that I had escaped so easily. Soon after they paid me a day's work apiece, as their due share of the common penalty. . . .

I would it were possible to pursue this history without repeating, so frequently, the pronoun I; but when the hero of the piece is the relator also, egotisms are unavoidable. I must therefore bespeak indulgence in that behalf.

Chapter III

A THIEF OF VIRTUE

All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man, in his time plays many parts.
SHAKESPEARE.

But now that the revolving wheel of time had rolled away twenty-one years of my existence, and admonished me, that I was, at length, my own man, and no longer subject to the mandates and authority of my parents, in the manner I had heretofore been, I began to think it high time to think of providing for myself. To this end I made application to my father desiring him to bestow on me some part of his property, as an encouragement to industry, and towards my obtaining a comfortable subsistence in the world, in proportion as he had done by my elder brother. My father, for some time, evaded all direct answers to my requests, while I continued both solicitations and complaints. After he had been sufficiently teased (as perhaps he thought) with my importunities, he finally rejected my suit, declaring it his intention, that his eldest son should possess the whole of his estate, which, might be worth (as I supposed) one thousand dollars.

Thus being disappointed in my hopes, and cut off from that, which had long been the ground of my only dependence, I grew angry and discontented, not well knowing what steps to pursue. The reflection that I had pretty diligently served my father during minority, (the whole term of which had been applied to the business of husbandry) and that my labor had contributed in a great measure to the support of the family, was constantly present to my indignant view. I considered, also, that little or no time had been allowed me to obtain knowledge, so that my education had been totally neglected, save the small pittance I had gleaned miscellaneously, by means of my own industry. My mind being continually agitated with considerations of this sort, I was induced to believe myself entitled to some share of my father's estate, and thought I was injured by his ill-timed parsimony. Whereupon I determined at all events to seek redress, and that too in some clandestine manner, if unable to persuade him to do me justice: accordingly, though with diminished hopes of success, I made one trial more, to obtain his paternal assistance; but his ideas upon the subject corresponding in no shape with my own, he remained inflexible, to my remonstrances and deaf to every entreaty. Irritated at *his* obstinacy and *my own* ill treatment, I resolved, without more hesitation, to appropriate to my use some portion of his personal property, as a partial indemnification for the labor and toil I had expended in his service.

It is written (as 'tis said) in the Hebrew annals, that the man, who gave his son, neither property, education nor trade, brought him up to be a thief. The truth of this was verified in me, for after ruminating a while in order to concert the most eligible method, in which to be even with my fire, I at last concluded (as the outset and beginning of what I had further in view) to take his horse; that being the most convenient article of his domestic inventory, and best suited to the dispatch, that seemed needful in my novel undertaking. Accordingly, at a convenient season, under pretense of riding but a few miles, I made my flight with the horse to Chester, in Hampshire, where I sold him for about thirty dollars, in ready money.

Never till now had I been in possession of so considerable a sum. It appeared, in my enraptured view, as a plentiful fund, and sure earnest of future riches and prosperity. Already was I as much swollen in imagination, as though I had been proprietor of the mines of Potofi or Peru, and enjoyed imaginary happiness, in long perspective, as my indubitable destiny. With such sanguine hopes of success I now commenced those first peregrinations, which fortune afterwards compelled me to continue for many a painful year.

Leaving Chester, I strolled from place to place, defraying itinerary expenses, in part by occasional labor, though principally with the contents of my purse. This mode of life continued for nearly two months. But mark the sequel of the present adventures; although on leaving

home I had seriously resolved to return no more, at least for a long while, yet now finding my pecuniary avails to be daily diminishing, and myself unable to glide through the world in silver slippers, as the warmth of fancy had portrayed in such glowing colors; and withal being too fickle and capricious to continue in the same mind long at a time, I began to repent that I had forsaken my paternal residence at all, and wished most ardently to return thither. But the effects of my father's displeasure I dreaded with peculiar awe; and blamed the folly, that had produced the present evils. Meantime the money, which, at first, I had contemplated with so much delight, continuing to dwindle, till scarce a moiety of its original sum remained; my dreams of happiness became wholly dispelled, and my expectations of felicity laid in the dust. In a word I found I had made a wrong estimate of human life, and resolved (however fearfully) to return home, like the prodigal son, and apologize for my misconduct in the best manner I could, hoping to pacify my parent, by paying him what money I had left, and which I thought might pretty well compensate for the loss of his horse.

With these views I set off on foot for Lee, and arrived thither in the course of a few days. When I approached the much dreaded presence of my father he appeared sorely displeased, and reprimanded me sharply for eloping with his horse, desiring to know where I had bestowed him. I replied, that I had sold him in Chester, and tak-

ing out the money I had left, presented it most respectfully, expressing, at the same time, great sorrow and contrition for all past offenses. He took the money, but complained that his horse was worth much more, and rebuked me sharply for my past bad conduct, which he predicted would bring me to the gallows in the end, if I persisted in such pernicious practices. But my father's displeasure subsided by degrees, and I continued to reside with him as formerly.

Awhile after our reconciliation, I repaired to Nottingham, a neighboring town, with intention to reside there for a season. In this place I contracted some acquaintance with a young woman, named Sally Hall. As lasciviousness I have every reason to suppose was an original ingredient in my composition, I made love to this damsel, and continued the courtship, with ardor, for a time; but at last her pregnancy was the result of our frequent intimacy. She gave me to understand her situation, and hinted expectations of my healing the transgression by marriage. This however I had no intention of doing. At present I was averse from all thoughts of matrimonial alliance, especially so with the young woman in question, of whose virtue and accomplishments I had not the most exalted opinion. Nevertheless I gave her flattering encouragement, that, I would in due season comply with her wishes, only our connection must be kept secret, 'till things should be arranged to our liking. In this she fully acquiesced—my discourse as the sugar plum was

pleasing to the credulous miss, and inasmuch, as her reliance was strong on my assurances, she remained confidently easy for several months. But after that, as I neglected the accustomed visits, she became fully convinced of my duplicity and intention to deceive her, and, being at this crisis, urged on by her friends, she went and entered a complaint before Esq. Butler, a neighboring magistrate, whose warrant for my arrestation was committed to one Dearborn, a constable, with directions to see me forthcoming with all speed.

This man dealt so craftily in the business, that, one day, he caught me by surprise, as I was walking in a bye crossway, without suspicion of his or any other person's being near. I was carried before Esquire Butler, and requested to find sureties for my personal appearance at the next Court of General Sessions of the peace, which then took cognizance of such matters. To be handled in this compulsatory manner was to me, at that early period of life, an entire novelty, for which reason I was greatly intimidated, not knowing in what way the affair would terminate. But as my propitious stars ordained, I was at this juncture, pretty well furnished with cash, and, by a judicious distribution of seven dollars to one man, three to another, and so on, made a number of fast and able friends, who promised to stick by and see the matter through. They fulfilled articles to a tittle, for, through their management, the girl was brought to settle for ten dollars, receiving which, she signed the back of the war-

rant satisfied, giving me a receipt too in full of all further demands.

At this lucky escape from the noose, which had been spread for me so ingeniously, I felt completely happy, but at the precise moment of finishing the business with Sally, I received a fresh alarm, by the sudden appearance of a man named Peter Folsom, who, it seems, had procured a warrant against me for stealing his saddlebags. He had heard of my being in the custody of Dearborn, and thought this an opportune season for my apprehension, wherefore he came, with sundry adjutants, to execute that purpose. However, by the help of my new-made friends, who, by the bye, were well paid for their trouble, I received some intimation of his designs. They advised me to make a private escape, if feasible, but if this failed, they were to knock down all, who should oppose my retreat. Having gained assurance of their utmost exertions at the moment necessity should call, I sallied out of doors with intent to gain the woods, well knowing, when once there, I could baffle pursuit undoubtedly. But this attempt was frustrated in the bud, for unluckily I was seized by the adverse party within a few paces of the house. Still I manfully resisted their efforts, 'till, my confederates issuing forth, the rencountre became general, and was continued with undaunted heroism on both sides. Victory however remained no long time dubitable ere she declared herself decisively in our favor. We succeeded in knocking down several of our opponents, and

clearing my way from them all, I marched off triumphantly to the nearest thickets, where I lay concealed until evening. I then made the best of my way to Lee, inwardly exulting at the curious issue of those perplexing affairs.

I was now free it is true, from the apprehension of a jail, on my forsaken mistress's account, yet not so from the effects of our acquaintance, for the above fascinating amour had made a deep impression on my fancy, and rendered me more unstable than before. Being once initiated into the mysteries of the Cyprian Goddess, a natural warmth of temperament enrolled the name of *Tufts* among the number of her votaries ever afterwards. In fine my inclination always fervid, but now fired with new incentives, impelled me, more strongly than formerly, to sacrifice at the shrine of Venus, nor could I resist the impulses of so bewitching a deity. It was, rather, my coat of arms to pursue what was pleasing in my own eyes, for to the rigid graces of self-denial I was quite a stranger. From this period, therefore, I waxed more industrious in the pursuit of amorous adventures, and might, perhaps in this course of the narrative, boast of success in achievements of that kind, did it either become my intended gravity, or were it consistent with that taciturnity, which the delicacy of the fair sex has a right to impose. Disliking therefore all ambition of the foregoing cast, I mean not to plume myself on rehearsal of conquests in the fields of love, but, on the reverse, to abbreviate the

detail of my juvenile exploits, so far, at least, as to repress the names of my female favorites, whose connections with me are not already notorious.

I now continued to reside with my parents, for a considerable space, and assisted them, as usual, in the management of their farm. Having met with such miserable success in the transfer of my father's horse, I thought, contrary to former intentions, it would be the best policy to drop all ideas of seeking redress by stealth, in the hope he would one day relent and do me justice. In the interim I engaged in a variety of amours with sundry females, to whom I paid my addresses alternately, as best suited with my inclination or convenience. Nevertheless, when about twenty-two years of age, those temporary connections were all dissolved by an occurrence, which then took place, and which finally terminated in my junction in marriage with the object of my fondest vows. The maiden name of the young woman, who thus engrossed my affections and captivated my heart, was Lydia Bickford. She lived in Durham, a few miles distant from the place of my nativity. In one of my rambling excursions to which I was invincibly prone, I happened to meet with her in company, and was so highly charmed with her person and conversation, that I ardently coveted a more intimate acquaintance with so amiable an object. As her beauty in my partial views, appeared unrivaled—so, for other women, surely, I had never conceived such peculiar fancy. Unable to resist the fervency of passion, I made

her repeated visits, and had the happiness of a favorable reception. At the end of a few months I married and moved her home to the town of Lee.

If there be a propriety in denominating any portion of my adult life happy, the first summer of it subsequent to my marriage, is more especially entitled to that appellation, since with my pleasing wife, for whom I had a sincere affection, I lived in the utmost harmony and love. I met with no disturbance from *abroad* to allay the happiness I enjoyed at *home*, and seemed to have forgotten all former follies and *vagrances*. My vices lay listless and dormant, as though they had lost primeval energy, and were fast progressing towards oblivion, while each succeeding day wore a more serene aspect, and glided away in tranquillity and peace. In supplying the wants of my little family I took real delight, and my endeavors were not altogether successless.

Had those halcyon scenes continued but a few more years, while in the ardor of youth, and forming, as I then was, habits for life, the seeds of vice inherent in my constitution, might have been stifled, perhaps, and overcome, so that I might never have perpetrated the crimes of which I am chargeable, or have passed through the dismal tragedies, that have since occupied the greater portion of my days.

But this tranquil period was not designed for long continuance; for, in truth, six months, from my marriage, had scarcely elapsed, ere an untoward affair took place,

which involved me in greater difficulties and disquietudes than ever; the bare recollection of those broils is yet productive of painful emotions, and excites my indignation against the unjust author of them. The particulars shall be recounted briefly. I had a neighbor by the name of James Burleigh, a respectable farmer and man of account. Somehow or other, about the time I mention, he lost two bushels of rye from his garret; being well acquainted with my conduct from childhood, particularly so, with the manner in which I had taken my father's horse, his suspicions alighted upon me, so he had no hesitation in reporting that I had stolen his rye, for which it was reasonable I should make restitution. He came and charged me with the fact and threatened prosecution, in case of my refusal to make amends. I essayed to exculpate myself, by pleading ignorance of the matter in question; but he discredited my assertions, went post haste and procured a warrant, by which I was arrested and carried before George Frost, Esq., who making some inquiry into the business, and finding the proof insufficient for conviction, intimated to Burleigh (as I have reason to believe) something to that amount, for the latter, by not having the warrant returned in form, stopped all further proceedings and *permitted* my return home. But the complainant Burleigh, unsatisfied with this termination of the process, the writ was altered, as I supposed, or a new one procured, by virtue of which I was again taken into custody, and haled before Walter Bryant, jun. Esq.,

and there examined sufficiently. However, this magistrate, finding no color of proof to my disadvantage, censured Burleigh's whole management, and thereupon discharged me without day.

And now seriously I affirm, that I know nothing of the rye above mentioned, nor do I believe it ever went, unless with the privity of Burleigh's own family. I have been informed, that he laid himself open to an action, for this false and causeless accusation, and had I then known as much law, as I have since been obliged to learn, I should, positively, have made him smart for his imprudence and folly.

This transaction of Burleigh's, I have ever deemed the birthday and beginning of the many mischiefs and misfortunes, which, with few intermissions, have constantly attended me since that period. . . .

On the whole, I had no alternative but to remain at home, the butt of indignity and reviling, or else to leave family and friends, and seek a retreat in some distant quarter, where I should be an entire stranger. The latter was my determination.

Chapter IV

THIEVES FALL OUT

On a sudden open fly, with impetuous recoil,
And jarring sound, th' infernal doors and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder. MILTON.

I RESOLVED to forsake Lee, but the reluctance with which I left my wife and tender child to the mercy of an unfeeling world, and perhaps forever, as I saw no probability of returning soon, exceeds all power of description. Suppressing, however, to the utmost, my feelings, on the distressful occasion, I bade adieu to my little family, and shaped my course eastwardly. Being but a troynovant in traveling, and quite unhackneyed in the ways of the world, I was put to many straits and difficulties in this new pilgrimage, but after visiting many places, I came at length to Saco, in the (then) province of Maine.

Here in quest of refreshment I chanced to call into a certain house, in which I found a man by the name of James Dennis, by nation a Hibernian. With this man I entered into discourse, and was anon much pleased with his vivacity and the manner of his conversation. In the formation of our minds there was something congenial, I believe, which, like loadstone and steel, attracted each other. To him I made known as much of my situation

and circumstances, as I thought prudent to disclose, informing him, that my present intention was to hire out as a day laborer. He acquainted me that he had already done the same, with the proprietor of the present house, and that his employer wished to engage another hand. To me this intelligence was grateful; we went both together to the gentleman who, he said wanted to hire. I offered my services, and the conditions being agreed on, I went to work with Dennis the next day; our employment being husbandry and the clearing of new land.

Myself and fellow laborer soon contracted a very familiar acquaintance, nature had endowed him with convertible powers, and for me he had imbibed no small predilection. He had observed me, however, to be frequently thoughtful, or in a brown study as it were, and was solicitous to know the occasion. As he had gained my esteem as well as confidence, I recapitulated my misfortunes and the cause of the dejection, which, he said, was so visible in my countenance. He smiled at the rehearsal and seemed to make light of my mishaps, avering them to be merely ideal in comparison with the evils, that had fallen to his share. My uneasiness he imputed to youth and inexperience; nevertheless, with much fraternal tenderness, he endeavored to cheer my spirits with the hope of better days in embryo. This confabulation ended with a detail of some particulars of his own life, which I thought truly surprising.

A few days after the above, hearing me complain of in-

ability to support self and family in the manner I desired, he started as from a reverie, and said, if I would be led by his counsels, he would put me in a way to acquire some considerable property. I requested an explanation, so he went on to say, that he knew of a store in Saco, (Mr. Pickard's of Ipswich) with every avenue to which he was perfectly acquainted, and out of which we might take goods to any amount whatever. The goods might be carried, without danger of discovery, into the country and be disposed of for ready money. This he observed would be a more expeditious method to acquire the *desiderata*, than was the dull employment to which we then submitted. In short, the scheme he had laid down far surpassed anything of the kind, which had ever entered my imagination. Being no adept in the art of appropriating to myself, in a genteel manner, the property of others, I was suspicious of ill consequences, and therefore made objections, not only as to the feasibility of his plan, but to the danger of detection in its execution. But my demurs were all overruled by his engaging to be accountable for our success ultimately, in case of my submission to his particular management. As I had no contemptible opinion of the man's capacity, I consented without more ado, and thereon, collecting my arrear of wages, accompanied him forthwith to Saco, the compact part of which lay only seven miles distant. Dennis was very confident of success, and strove to encourage his drooping companion,

but, to confess the truth, the fear of detection was a prevailing ingredient with me, pending the whole voyage.

We reached the village of Saco a little before nightfall, and entered a shop to procure the means of exhilarating our spirits, and of fitting us for the arduous enterprise. As the moments seemed precious we resolved on effecting our business that very evening. Wherefore, after tippling till near bedtime, we sallied forth, and drew near the store in question, concealing ourselves by the wayside, so as to observe all that passed. In this posture we waited till all was still, and the people in bed and asleep, as we presumed. Then we set forward, and coming up to the store, carefully reconnoitered every avenue. We were at some loss about matters, so withdrew to a small distance to hold consultation in what shape to commence the attack. My Irish friend began by observing that one end of the shop had been fitted up for a wash house, and he rather supposed this the most vulnerable quarter. In short, we agreed to make a first essay on the wash house door. To this end Dennis led the van, while I, staggered at the magnitude of the attempt, followed with trepidation.

On examination we found the door less strongly fastened, than we had imagined, for means were readily devised to force it open without disturbance. Instantly we entered the wash room, and waited a few minutes, in a listening attitude, to catch the smallest echo, that might float through the air; but no sounds vibrated on the ear;

a profound silence prevailed, as the general pulse of life stood still.

It being tolerably dark we ventured, at length, to light a candle, which, by groping about, we found near the fireplace. The only obstruction that now remained, was the door communicating with the store room. This entrance we found to be fast locked, but Dennis drew out his knife and cut the hinges. This was not difficult, seeing they were made only of leather. Every impediment being thus removed, Dennis directed me to leave the house, and watch by the side of the outer door, while he should explore the premises; and since he knew me to be unversed, at that time, in the flash tongue, he desired me to preserve silence, and knock only against the door in case of alarm. I took post accordingly; meanwhile my file leader went into the store and proceeded with prosperity and dispatch. He found, however, but little money, for which reason it was needful to take the greater hold of other articles. Finally, he packed together two large bundles, consisting of English goods, and a few other commodities, to the value of about two hundred dollars, and brought them forth to the outer door. This whole business was completed in about thirty minutes, by which time we were ready for departure. But here I would just give a small piece of cautionary advice to shopkeepers in general: it is, to leave but little cash in such stores, as are remote from their dwelling houses, since the loss of goods may possibly be sustained with

less inconveniency, than that of ready money, which is an article to be spared not altogether so well.

With the booty we made our way through the compact part of the town, and then (veering) traveled westwardly six or eight miles, highly elated indeed with our fortunate acquisition. But now we arrived at the house of one Richard Dutton, an old acquaintance of Dennis's, where we proposed to make a stand, and deposit our booty for the present. We acquainted Dutton and wife with the manner in which we had acquired the articles, they engaging to secrete them effectually, and befriend us. After devoting ourselves to rest and refreshment, during the residue of the night and greater part of the next day, and regaling upon good cheer and agreeable drink, till we became as merry as so many Greeks, Dennis and Dutton, a little before the close of day, went out with a few trinkets to dispose of them for cash and such necessaries as our present inclination demanded. In transacting this business they took it into their heads, that, as the goods had been obtained at a cheap store, they might afford to sell cheap too, especially for cash in hand. In this, however, they overshot themselves, for their customers, supposing they sold at too low a rate to come by the things honestly, seized and detained both them and their lading. A magistrate and other officers being called in, the culprits were so hardly handled, and besieged withal to acknowledge how they came by the articles, that Dutton (the privilege of admission as King's evidence being

promised him) at last confessed all, informing, more particularly, of the commodities secreted at his own house. Dennis, too, was so closely pressed that he confessed every fact, and betrayed what he knew respecting his young proficient, Henry Tufts.

When those ministers of justice (or rather vengeance) had gathered the necessary information, they speedily set out for Dutton's abode, in quest of me and the other articles. Their arrival was excessively early in the morning, so that I, who happened to be quietly in bed with my friend Dutton's wife, dreaming, I protest, of no harm, till I heard them thundering at the door, had scarce time to retreat from the arms of my playmate, ere they entered the room and made me prisoner. Seeing but one bed in the cottage, they demanded where I had lodged the night preceding. I replied "on the floor." They charged me with fallacy, intimating, that from appearances, I must have bundled with Dutton's wife, but it being no part of my creed to criminate myself, where the facts could not be fairly proved, I positively denied their assertions. Dutton seemed to trouble his pate but little about the business, but, being requested to produce the residue of the goods, he did it alertly, to the satisfaction of the whole company. This over, they bade Dennis and me prepare for jail, and presently after hurried us to Saco, where having undergone another examination, we were escorted under a strong guard to Falmouth (now Portland) jail, and there confined in irons.

It was late in autumn (1770) when it was our mishap to become inmates of this horrid mansion, wherefore, being destitute of fire and bedding, we suffered miserably during imprisonment. We continued in the most comfortless situation for fifteen days together, without making a single effort for effecting our escape. At length, growing uneasy, we thought it high time to devise some stratagem for that purpose. We concerted several, but on trial, the means proved inadequate to the undertaking. We had instruments of no sort to force a breach through the prison walls, so that in our desponding view, the obstacles to deliverance appeared insuperable.

This was the first time I had ever been immured within the walls of a prison, consequently I sustained my sufferings with less patience and fortitude than did Dennis. My handcuffs I thought intolerable, and bitterly regretted the part I had taken (thus unwarily) in breaking Pickard's store. But why do I mention the poignancy of my sensations at this season? How often, when under the pressure of affliction, have I repented of my crimes, and of my follies, yet have plunged precipitately into the like or greater miseries again? So inconsistent, so mutable a being is man! ! !—We remained awhile longer in the same gloomy situation, when Dennis, who was remarkably fertile in expedients, suggested, that if we could prevail with Mr. Modley, the prison keeper, to allow us a little fire, he did not scruple but we might burn a passage through the side of the jail, and so make our escape. Had

we been provided with implements of any kind, fire, undoubtedly had been our *dernier resort*, but destitute, as we were, of every requisite, we knew of nought else, of which to avail ourselves, so resolved, at all hazards, to try the event of that, if so lucky as to obtain the article.

Accordingly, the next day, we represented to the jailor how much we had suffered already from the severity of the cold and from nakedness, beseeching him, withal, to allow us a little fuel, to warm our benumbed limbs in this inclement season. The keeper was a benevolent man and truly pitied, I believe, our sufferings, wherefore, he granted our request, but had the precaution, to extinguish the fire with a bucket of water, every evening, lest we might compass some mischief. Yet we soon found a remedy for this evil, for having a large piece of a broken earthen milk pan, we contrived to place it crosswise in the funnel of the chimney, as far above the mantle piece, as we could well reach. In this vessel, one certain evening, we deposited a small brand of fire, a few minutes previous to the customary return of the jailor. Presently, coming in, he quenched the embers as usual, but, to our satisfaction had no suspicion of our plan.

On his leaving us, we reclaimed the hidden fire, and were careful not to lose it for lack of feeding. With some anxiety we watched the passing hours, till about eleven o'clock at night, when thinking it high time for all to be sound asleep, we set fire to the broadside of the jail, a few feet above the flooring, intending to burn a hole

through sufficiently large for our exit. The timbers, which composed the sides of the prison, were fourteen inches in thickness, being placed hard by one another, and sheathed on the inside with two inch oak plank, the outside was boarded and clapboarded. We attended the fire unremittingly by the space of two hours, and burned away the wood with an expedition that scarce seemed tedious to our eager wishes. By this time we had made an opening quite through the wall, as large in circumference, as the head of our gallon keg. "Courage, (said Dennis, whose eyes, I perceived, were nearly closed with smoke,) courage, my good lad, the game goes well; if we manage the fire rightly, there'll be no kind of danger." I thought so too, and, upon the whole, we both grew pretty confident of success, but presently a provoking accident occurred, which disconcerted the whole scheme; overturned our fond hopes, and rendered escape, in this way impracticable. The new disaster was this. The fire had been creeping, though very gradually, through the interstices of the timber, from the time of kindling it, yet we had made shift to control it by the help of a pail of water. But by the time we had burned through as above, our water was all expended, the fire then increased with surprising rapidity, and began blazing, inside and out, with much briskness. So that our room was immersed in such thick volumes of smoke, as to admit the fetching of scarce a single breath. One pailful of water more would have done the thing completely, as, by means of that, the flames

had been checked long enough for all purposes. But the room being thus filled with smoke and fire; water all spent; the flames spreading and our design impracticable further, we were constrained, at last, to shout for help. Our loud vociferations aroused, anon, the whole family, which drawing near, found us, poor devils, on the very point of suffocation. The whole posse were collected in a few minutes, who united their efforts to conquer the unruly element, which raged by this time, with ungovernable fury. Full three hours were expended in this disagreeable service, though water (not to mention crow bars and axes) was used in abundance. At last, however, they succeeded in arresting the progress of the fire, but the jail was nearly ruined, for the breach in the wall was sufficient for the admission of a team of oxen. I gazed on the fruits of our labor with some admiration, and wished my hands at liberty, that I might have escaped; but my sighs were in vain.

All this while we had been treated with civility by the bystanders, except that I received one stroke of the hand from the prison keeper at his first entrance.

The jail was now adjudged unsuitable for the retention of prisoners, so it was thought advisable to send us packing to Old York jail*; but Thanksgiving being near, we were kept under guard, in Mr. Modley's family, till that solemnity should be over. . . .

* Perhaps the sole survivor of Tufts' numerous jails.—*E.P.*

Chapter V

TAKEN FROM THE COUNTY JAIL

Fresh troubles flow, in one unceasing course,
From various follies, as their fruitful source.

THE day after Thanksgiving we were confided to the charge of Sheriff Bagley, and others, in order to be conveyed to Old York jail. When we had gotten as far as Wells, we all entered a tavern to rest a little and procure a small portion of refreshment. Our keepers leaving Dennis and me in irons, adjourned, for better accommodation, into another apartment, but, while they were regaling and feasting to a merry degree, my partner Dennis, broke his handcuffs in the crotch of the chimney crane, and betook himself to immediate flight. A few minutes after, our conductors coming out, demanded whither Dennis had withdrawn. "If he be the prudent man I think him, (said I) he's, by this time, three miles ahead at the least." *"At the least*, then, (replied they) we'll take care of you." Saying this they remounted their steeds, and proceeded with me to Mr. Row's, the jail keeper of Old York, where, instantly, I was thrust into confinement. The damages which Dennis and I had done Falmouth jail had been much rumored about the country, so that now I was strongly handcuffed and cast into the securest ward. Here I thought it best to remain inactive, as my

motions were very scrupulously observed. I continued in this prison nineteen days, when Pickard, the prosecutor, arrived from Ipswich, and made me a visit. He said if I would agree to ship with his brother at Newburyport, and sail on a three months' voyage to the West Indies, (he, Mr. Pickard, receiving my wages) that on such condition, he would have me liberated, and, as a further encouragement to behave well, would furnish me with two quintals of fish for a sea venture. To all this I agreed, so Mr. Pickard went and procured my enlargement, by paying, as I supposed, a small matter of cost. We then set out immediately for Ipswich, myself on foot, having no better mode of conveyance. When we had reached Newbury Old Town, he said he had a mind to call in at the next tavern, inviting me to do the like, but I declined. So he told me, if I would behave well, I might continue my journey, and he would overtake me shortly. I said yes, and set forward, but traveling about three-quarters of a mile, without company, was so unfortunate as to miss my way, and never came across my deliverer afterwards. . . .

The difficulties I had met with gave me a disrelish to adventures of a kindred species, so I concluded even to return home, and visit again my family and friends. This I did without loss of time, but my wife was surprised at my sudden appearance, for hearing of the imprisonment, she had cherished but little hopes of my so speedy acquittal.

JAIL AT OLD YORK

I soon perceived that the people of Lee were in full possession of my late misadventures, and that the same had been a subject of animadversion through the neighborhood. My enemies had now a colorable pretext to treat me with indignity, and of this they were not dilatory in taking advantage. But my spirits naturally high set, ill brooked such humiliating usage. The people I disliked, but their invectives I abominated; for my conduct though injudicious, had not extinguished all sense of injury, nor annihilated my feelings as a man.

The people of Lee, for whatever reasons, were much embittered against me, so that none cared to employ me; but to live without means seemed altogether impossible, wherefore I resolved to abandon the place, and that as soon as family affairs would permit. My wife was greatly opposed to my leaving her in this manner, insomuch that I hesitated upon the subject, but my departure was accelerated by an accident here worth noticing.

A certain party of men belonging to Lee and Newmarket, who had been at Capt. Hill's training, passed necessarily near my house, on their return home, which was late in the evening. Among them was one Elisha Thomas, a desperate fellow, but who has since found his deserts. This man was the ringleader, it seems, of the whole mob. When they had gotten as far as my humble cot, they made a stand in the road, and Thomas communicated to the others his design of pulling my house in pieces before leaving the ground. As they were all

highly stimulated, I believe, with drink, they applauded the ingenious proposal, and approached in a body. Thomas being foremost, seized the end of a board, jutting a little beyond the residue, and pulled it off the house. By this time I thought it stood me in hand to make some exertion in defense of self and property. Having a good musket, charged with two balls, I snatched it in haste, and looking out, demanded the occasion of such treatment. Thomas, with terrible oaths, repeated his determination of tearing my house in pieces before quitting the spot. I bid him touch another stick at his peril, for I was an armed man, and would drop him certainly, if he did. He damned me for a rascal, and told me to fire if I dared, at the same instant, he again rushed forward, and catching hold of another board attempted to wrest it off. By this time I had become so exasperated, that for a few moments I was bereaved of reasoning powers; taking, therefore, good aim at my adversary's breast, I pulled trigger, but my gun, which I thought certain, only snapped in the pan. I made a second, and a third attempt, but my gun still refused fire. I was preparing to make the shot more certain, when Thomas, finding my resolution as desperate as his own, thought it most prudent to desist, and to march off with his whole party.

The next day not knowing the reason of my gun's failure, I tried her at a mark, and she gave fire without the smallest difficulty.

This furious attempt upon me, in my own castle, was

a convincing proof, that I could no longer abide at home in peace or safety. For that reason I took leave of my family, and quitted Lee, not knowing whither to shape my course.

Fortune directed my steps to Number four,* where I engaged in the service of John Spooner, and drove his sleigh for a month, but growing weary of this irksome employment, I left it, and proceeded to Claramont,† in Hampshire, (it being now early in the spring of 1771). Here I went to work with one Enoch Judd in clearing land. He was a man, as the saying is, well to pass in the world, so I continued at his house (as will be seen) a considerable time, and showed so much attention to business, that Judd was extremely well pleased with my assiduity. One day as we were at work in his field, he inquired whether I was a married man, my answer was in the negative, he asked the cause of my celibacy,—I intimated the fault was not mine. He said he had a couple of likely girls, and for that I was a good industrious lad, I might have my choice of them. I thanked him cordially for his obliging offer, but here our conversation closed on that topic. However his alluring overture wrought so powerfully upon my imagination, that, mauger present conjugal connections, I had no power to resist the pleasing idea, that prompted me to make courtship to Sally, the elder of the two girls above mentioned. Indeed for

* Old "Fort Number 4," now Charlestown, N. H.—*E.P.*
† Claremont.—*E.P.*

that pretty miss I had conceived no small liking, so, without delay I paid her my address, and had the happiness to find myself the object of her regard. . . .

My dulcinea had been long meditating upon a journey to Waterbury, in Connecticut, one hundred and sixty miles distant, where her brother-in-law resided, the same being also the place of her own nativity, and now was the time prefixed for her departure. Her father had a mind I should escort her thither, in which his desire I heartily acquiesced. We sat out well mounted, and arrived safely at Waterbury, without the least perverse occurrence. We repaired immediately to Mr. Brewster's her brother-in-law's house, who was a tailor by trade. I rode up to the door and knocked. He came out and asked if that man (meaning me) was her husband, she answered, "I don't know as you will own him"; he said, "walk in brother." We went in, and were treated with every mark of kindness and civility. Here we tarried about three weeks, and having made every necessary preparation for our intended marriage before leaving Claramont, we now sent for a priest, and by him were joined in the bands of wedlock. A few days subsequent to this, we bade adieu to our good friends in those parts, and returned to Claramont. As we approached her father's dwelling, the old lady, her mother, came out to meet and salute us, when surveying us with much complaisancy, she said, "walk in children," for she had heard of our union while absent. We were now very graciously received by both father and mother,

as well as by the residue of the family. They were all greatly rejoiced at our safe return, and must needs send for Mr. Faucett, the minister, to pay us a visit on the occasion. He honored the invitation, and the first words he spoke to my wife were. *Sally, Sally! I think you have used me very ill, in being married while abroad—I have married all the rest of the family in the church way, and you ought to have been married in the church way too.* Upon this, I gave her privately four dollars, desiring her to present them to the priest, and make also, some apology for our conduct. This duty she performed very gracefully, telling him as things *stood,* it was not in her power to prevent what had happened, but hoped he would esteem it the same as though she had been married by himself. He replied that it was the same, and wished we might live together in amity and the enjoyment of prosperity to the end of life. He then uttered the following sentence, which I thought singular. *You seem to be man and wife, but if you are not so, I pronounce you man and wife.* On this we arose and made obeisance, to signify our acknowledgment of the marriage. We spent the remainder of the evening in good humor, conversing upon various subjects, till a late hour, when Mr. Faucett returned home.

With my new spouse, (if I may so term her) for whose person I felt a most tender regard, I should now have lived very happily, had it not been for the continued inquietude that harassed my mind, lest my real condition in life

should somehow become known. I dreaded lest my wife or her friends might obtain information of my former marriage, and of the many disgraces I had met with in the world. Reflections of this sort had, from my first acquaintance with Sally, incessantly vexed and tormented my imagination, stretching it upon the rack of unpleasing expectancy. The consequences proved that my apprehensions were but too well founded, for I had consorted with my new spouse little more than a honeymoon, when that which I so much dreaded, came really to pass.

A certain man, named Abner Clough, who lived near the place of my nativity, and was well knowing to most of my concerns, happened, at this juncture, to pass through Claremont, when hearing of my new marriage with Sally, he informed the people that I had a prior wife and family in Lee, and was besides a very bad fellow, having behaved so ill at home, that I was forced to run away to prevent punishment.

This story was soon carried to Sally and her friends, and gave them a serious alarm. They sent directly to Clough, and received a full confirmation of the ungrateful intelligence, together with the particulars of my breaking Pickard's store, and subsequent imprisonment. By this black account they became exasperated to the last degree, and loaded me with reproaches of every kind. To those reproaches I could indeed make but little reply.

Not content with venting their spleen in this manner,

they threatened me with exemplary punishment, for treating thus my best benefactors. Such being the state of things, I thought it wisdom to decamp seasonably, so I left Claremont that very evening, without so much as bidding adieu to Sally, or any of her friends.

After a circuitous ramble I even ventured to revisit Lee, where my first wife yet held possession of the cattle. She had heard of my extraordinary marriage, during my late elopement, and therefore gave me an uncouth welcome; however I cohabited with the dame, as formerly.

Soon after this I hired out, as a day laborer, with one deacon Tash, of Newmarket. On a certain day, while mowing grass in his meadow, I accidentally came across a huge wasp's nest. Having a mind for a little sport with the honest deacon, who was indeed quite a worthy and zealous man, I slyly cut the twig, from which the nest was suspended, and, in a gentle manner, conveyed it to a cock of hay, where I concealed it for the present. All this I did without the smallest disturbance to the meddlesome race. In the afternoon the Deacon and I went out with the team to haul hay. He mounted the wheels, as usual, to make the load, leaving me behind to manage the team. At length I drove in course to the bunch containing the waspy tribe, when pushing my fork through the nest, so as to break it pretty well to pieces, I pitched it up, hay and all, to the unsuspecting deacon, who was stripped entirely to the shirt. An armed host of those mischievous insects now seized him conjunctly, and stung him so in-

tolerably, that not being able to keep his post he pitched head foremost to the ground. Being still surrounded with his troublesome assailants, he scrabbled up with what agility he could muster, in order to retreat to a more respectful distance, but scampering away with more speed than forecast, he again lost his center of gravity and had the fresh misfortune to plunge precipitately into the main ditch. This had lately been thrown up to drain the meadow, and was, moreover, full of water, so that the old gentleman lay floundering in both water and mud, 'till I seeing the catastrophe, and fearing he might be suffocated, ran up to his assistance. We had a fearful time of it, to be sure, for in trying to clear him, I was prodigiously stung by the wasps myself. The deacon was in a sweet pickle, but no sooner did he recover breath for articulation, than he accused me of doing him this piece of roguery intentionally, and desired I would instantly quit his service. I asserted my innocence with much gravity, protesting I was extremely sorry for his misfortune; so that on further reflection, the good-natured man imputed the whole to mere accident, and expressed his thankfulness at escaping with no greater injury.

Chapter VI

IN AGAIN, OUT AGAIN

More grievous, than the ills of yore,
Are such as yet remain in store.

About this period I met with one James Smith, a Dutchman, whose disposition, I perceived, was analogous to my own. As kindred souls naturally agree, we became intimately associated. I took some pains to cultivate an acquaintance with this convenient blade, and to acquire his confidence; in both of which I succeeded to my wishes. At length we entered into partnership, and agreed to stick close by each other, for the present; but, being both in want of the means of support, we were compelled to have recurrence to furtive pursuits, my usual resort on pressing occasions. Hens, turkeys, sheep and the like, became the victims of our rapacious industry, and supplied our wretched larder with just sufficient to enable us to continue the unlawful pursuit. Farmers had to regret the loss of their fleecy tribes, and wives of the poultry, which were immolated daily on the altars of our hungry deities. But the solicitude of the sufferers was unavailing, for Smith and I concealed our plunder so artificially, as to baffle all attempts at detection, though we had frequent visits from such as suspected us to be the demons, who had thus *spirited* away their substance. . . .

My partner and I not having accumulated property by such spoliations, but in lieu thereof becoming destitute of apparel and other conveniences, we saw the necessity of striking some more important blow than any we had hitherto attempted. And the way to affect this readily presented; for Smith was familiar with a man belonging to the *Newfields* (in Newmarket) who had hinted that a certain store, the property of Smith Gilman and Levi Chapman, might be opened without difficulty. Moreover (Smith my informant) was well assured, that the same man would lend some assistance, though he bore at the time, the character of a gentleman. In expectation of this, we set out for the Newfields, and repaired to the house of Smith's friend and confident. We communicated the secret of our embassy and requested his advice. The project we found was far from displeasing our entertainer, for with much volubility, he went on to digest the proper mode of procedure, advising us to enter the store through a particular casement, which he represented as slightly fastened. We followed punctually his prescriptions, and our efforts were crowned with brilliant success; we forced a passage through the window, as directed, and took out of the store, cloths to the value of about one hundred dollars, two guineas in money, sundry pieces of silver, with a large quantity of other articles.

The goods we carried directly to the gentleman's house, and presented him with a pail of sugar, several rolls of ribband, and a piece of gauze, as a recompense for his

trouble, and then took our leave. As we intended to steer southwestwardly with the booty, we took, under cover of darkness, the highway leading through Stratham. I was mounted on a horse I had picked up a day or two before, but Smith being destitute of such conveniency, we contrived to supply the defect, by stealing a horse from one Barker, as we passed through the town last mentioned. Being now whole footed, we pushed on, full tilt, till we gained Haverhill ferry. It was about dawn of day, when we arrived at this place; so that, nobody being stirring, we took a boat, and crossed over without observation; and then drove on, with our half-famished steeds, to Pepperell, in Massachusetts; ourselves and horses, by the time we had recovered this station, being sufficiently fatigued with a forced march of forty-five miles.

Here we made a final halt for the day, and exposed our goods to sale, the same afternoon. On the edge of the evening, Gilman and Chapman entered Pepperell in pursuit of the thieves, and, if possible, to recover their property. Their coming was so abrupt that they surprised us effectually, before we had opportunity to secrete the goods, or make the smallest arrangement for a personal escape. Thus were we suddenly arrested, and taken into custody; when to our no small surprise, we found that the man who had contrived so conveniently, the method of breaking the store, and who had received also his quota of the stolen commodities, had turned informant against us, and had revealed the probable route we had taken. Deceitful

and treacherous as this person proved, I am unwilling to reveal his name to the public, especially as he has since removed to a distance from Newmarket, and now supports the character of a better man.

The next day Smith and I were conveyed back as far as Exeter. He was shut up in the common prison; but my doom was close confinement in the dungeon.

As they expected I should try hard to give them the slip, every precaution was taken for its prevention. My feet were shackled together with a large iron bolt, of two feet in length, which, at either end, was fastened with rivets to the irons surrounding my ankles; a strong chain, of two feet only, proceeded from the bolt to the floor, and was there secured with a huge iron staple. These iron appendages kept my feet at just such a distance asunder, and rendered my stepping one foot before the other upon the floor, altogether impossible. It was with extreme difficulty I could reach the place of office, or stretch my limbs on a miserable couch of straw. In such deplorable condition I continued, ninety days and nights, or rather one continued night of so long duration. Judge then what were my sufferings, and what my sensations must have been at that distressing time; what trouble, anxiety, and gloomy apprehensions must have taken possession of my mind, and absorbed every comfort of life; sequestered from all intercourse with the rest of mankind, and accompanied only with pain, shame, remorse and darkness, in a mansion of *darkness*, with hardly suf-

ficient food and clothing to prevent me from perishing; and bearing, for so long an interval, what God only knows, or the heart of man, by experience alone, is able to conceive; think, I say what must have been my sufferings, both of body and mind, at that dismal period.

The dampness of the dungeon, the offensive effluvia of the prison vault, my want of necessary food and clothing, and the troublesome vermin, which are generally the undisturbed inhabitants of a jail, altogether, so much dispirited and afflicted me, that I could obtain none, or very little rest, night or day. The consequence was my health visibly declined, and my strength daily decayed. At length, after a lapse of ninety tedious days, which seemed an entire age, the superior court sat at Exeter, and I, with my accomplice, Smith, were brought forth for trial. The proof of the felony being full against us, we were adjudged *guilty*. Our sentence was to receive thirty-five lashes on the naked back, of which twenty were assigned to my peculiar share. The whole were to be inflicted on the Monday then next ensuing; receiving which, we were to be imprisoned thirty-one days longer, and to pay, moreover, a certain sum in damages with costs; but in default of payment to be sold to make good the same.

After hearing sentence, Smith was recommitted to the common prison, but I was immured in the dungeon and loaded with chains as before. On the Monday succeeding, we were carried out to receive the destined punishment. The stripes were laid on by one of the prisoners

of the yard, Jacob Hardy; who, thinking to gratify the spectators, labored hard in fulfilling his odd vocation, administering the strange medicine, with so lavish a hand, that one had been led to imagine he intended this potion should be our last. But had he known the minds of the people, he would have abated (I presume) somewhat of his exertions; for being afterwards blamed by several of the bystanders, for exceeding the bounds of his duty, and his conscience (I suppose) smiting him severely, for punishing, so greedily, two of his unfortunate fellow prisoners, and that without offense received at their hands, he offered to treat us with a dollar's worth of punch; and doubtless would have done us that favor, had he not been discouraged by the keeper of the prison. . . .

In a few days my friends supplied me with instruments, by which, with much toil, I drilled a hole through the wall, sufficiently capacious, when stripped to the skin, for my corporal exit. The process of cutting I had concealed so effectually, by filling up the cavities with bread, whenever I ceased work, that none mistrusted my undertaking; and before the thirty-one days were fully elapsed, I was prepared to evacuate that most odious of tenements, the jail at Exeter. During all this while, no chapman (I intend no pun) appeared for the purchase of either Smith or me, though exposed to sale every day. But being thus ready to leave my detested abode, I determined to improve the first convenient season for that purpose. This occurred the ensuing evening. Yet, previous to depart-

ure, I had a fancy for a small matter of merriment with my fellow prisoner, Smith, who was in the cell overhead.

With a view to this, I acquainted him with my intention of quitting the premises that very night. He was importunate to learn by what means. I replied, "By the help of the devil, who is now at my beck and call, whenever I need his assistance." Smith had heard it reported that I was a wizard, and, being always the dupe of his own credulity, had now the simplicity to credit my ridiculous tale. Anxious of deliverance from his tedious confinement, he begged me to extricate him in a similar way. "Yes, said I, provided you will follow, with exactitude, my directions." He assented: so waiting till I presumed the people of the house were sound asleep, I called again to Smith, in a low key, and told him it was time to be doing, and that the first thing necessary was to strip off all our clothes, turn them inside out, and fling them out at the window. This injunction Smith executed with alertness, and so did I (bating the inversion of apparel) from more substantial motives. Being both stripped to the buff, I told him I should break bulk first, ten minutes after which he might follow, by repeating the following distich, to wit:

> "Come in old man, with that black ram,
> And carry me out, as fast as you can."

After giving my fellow sufferer this lesson, I crept out at the partition fracture, and flipping on my clothes,

stepped into the yard, just under Smith's window, who was listening at the grates, with no small solicitude, to learn the issue of my experiment. I informed him of my success, bade him repeat his creed, as instructed, which would certainly procure his enlargement also. He promised a punctilious performance, while I, without more colloquy, gathered up Smith's apparel, which I expected in all likelihood to need, and with it, sped away precipitately, leaving the poor wight to mumble over his ceremony at leisure.

Breathing once more the free air of liberty, I looked back with horror upon the severe trials I had lately passed through, and found sufficient cause to congratulate myself on the present happy deliverance. Wishing to revisit Lee, I sat off for the place, but such was my enfeebled condition, in consequence of so long and rigid a confinement, that it was not till after great difficulty that I arrived thither. My wife was both surprised and concerned at seeing me, so nearly was I emaciated to a skeleton; yet she might have expected this as a consequence of my starving so long amid the impurities of a dungeon. Notwithstanding which the natural firmness of my constitution soon replaced both health and spirits in pristine vigor. . . .

About this time, chancing to call into the shop of Mr. Daniel Chapman, in Newmarket, I received from him a smart reprimand on the score of stealing. He also, in facetious mood, charged me never to embezzle his prop-

erty, and said, as an inducement to honesty, he would tap my shoes. This piece of service he performed; while I from motives of gratitude, promised never to meddle with his substance, and was ever as good as my word; for, in fact, I was so handsomely treated, in all respects, by this gentleman, that I never harbored a thought of doing him the least injury, although opportunities were frequent.

My name, ere this, had sounded far and near, and divers people, who had been in the habit of insulting me with impunity, began now to be more fearful for their own interest, and more cautious of giving me needless offense, than formerly, as thinking me very revengeful, and capable of attempting anything, but impossibilities; for my own part I was extremely well pleased with their apprehensions.

It is an old observation that, *"there are more thieves than one"*; and really, at the period I speak of, as well as before and after, I was charged with many thefts and misdemeanors, of which I can plead entire innocency; as an instance of this the following may be adduced.

While I was last confined in the dungeon at Exeter, a certain countryman entered the town, in quest of Henry Tufts, who, he said, had stolen a yoke of his oxen. A gentleman present asked if he did not mistake, as to the person of the thief. The relator said, "No; for he was very confident that Tufts was the rogue, since he knew him well, and had, by immediate pursuit, overtaken him with the oxen, and snapped a pistol at his breast; yet the

sturdy knave escaped with the booty, after all." Upon this the gentleman told his informer, that Tufts was then fast chained in the dungeon, and had been thus for more than a month, so that it was impossible *he* should be the thief. He then dismissed the accuser with this salutary admonition. *"To be careful in future how he brought an accusation against any person till well assured of his identity."*

About this time I came across a man, who was in possession of a set of pictures, called *shows*, which were viewed by looking through magnifying glasses, artificially disposed for that purpose.* I was so much enamored with the sight of those rarieties, that I purchased them of the showman, at the price of thirty dollars, although, to make out the sum, it swept away nearly the whole property of which I was master. I was greatly fascinated with my new acquirement, and the principal business I followed for one winter, was carrying about those insignificant trifles, which I exhibited with great ostentation, at about a groat a sight. But my pecuniary emoluments being in no wise answerable to my expectations, I began to regret not only the consumption of time, but the original purchase also. In consonance with my feelings and situation, at that season, are the following stanzas.

* The peep-show, a feeble ancestor of the moving-picture theater has almost vanished from knowledge. It was once an important feature of wayfaring life. See Richardson Wright: *Hawkers and Walkers in Early America.* p. 180. Also, an article by F. Weitenkampf in the *Bulletin* of the New York Public Library, June 1921: 25:359-66.—*E.P.*

Now to and fro, thro' snow, lo how I go,
On hope some ore to cope for jocund show,
Tho' soon (so sorry for old folly grown)
I would, whole tote for good, to demon thrown.

Or thus:

Away at dawn, at dark afar and near,
At back a pack (a bauble rare and dear)
I wayward rake and take, each weary day,
Great pains, which gain a lazy lad may pay
At saddle bad, made sad, and cast at last,
At jailor L-dd (say glad) I had all cast.

Did the foregoing rhymes require explanation or glossary, I'd furnish the desideratum, but as whoever can supply the elipsis may comprehend the text, and whoso cannot, may pass it over, I shall close this article by observing, that after the consumption of much time on the aforesaid puerile toys, to the no small detriment of myself and others, the people in general, took it into their heads to rally me so immoderately, on the score of my indolence and vagrancy, that, at last, from conviction of its inutility, I grew quite ashamed of my trifling employment, and so gladly parted with the shows for ten dollars, making a losing go, every way, by this execrable business.

Some time posterior to all this, being on a visit at Ephraim Clough's in Lee, the company present started a novel diversion; namely, each in turn essayed to force open, with a strong and quick jerk, a sharp, half bent jackknife, without touching the blade. Some could do

this, others not, I tried the experiment among the rest, but, unhappily for me, had the ill luck to strike the knife into the thick of my thigh, where it stopped only by lodging against the bone. The wound was three inches deep, and came within an ace of costing my life. I continued bleeding so long, that my blood lost its usual color, and I had no strength remaining. I lay ill, with this dreadful wound, three months, before recovery of power to walk abroad, and even then was so weak and pale, that I more resembled a ghost, than a living person. In a word, everyone supposed the malady would terminate in a consumption and so end my days. Judging from my own feelings, I thought it time to set my house in order, and make some kind of preparations for departure hence. At this discouraging crisis I happened to meet with Capt. Josiah Miles, the great Indian hunter, who strongly advised my visiting the Indians of Sudbury, Canada,* who, he affirmed, would cure me, if the thing were morally possible. Upon due consideration I thought best to close with his advice, if perchance, I might surmount the long and tedious voyage. At present I was too well conscious of my inability to attempt it, and for that reason, concluded to abide at home a month longer, in which interim to make all needful preparations for the journey.

* Not the present Sudbury, in the Province of Ontario, but according to Col. Higginson, a township in Maine.—*E.P.*

Chapter VII

LIFE WITH THE INDIANS

I far prefer a savage life
To gloomy cares or vexing strife.

By the time prefixed I was equipped for departure, and had gathered (in my opinion) such a portion of health and strength, as might enable me to travel a few miles a day. So bidding adieu to family and friends, I set out on the precarious enterprise, but the most gloomy doubts of success and uncertainty of return, were my constant attendants on the way. I proceeded by short and slow marches, traveling sometimes not more than a mile or two in a day. The people, whom I visited on the road, used me, for the most part, with much kindness, otherwise, of necessity, I must have abandoned the expedition.

I shall not here attempt to decipher the multiplicity of difficulties and discouragements, arising from pain, sickness, want, and sometimes almost despair, which I encountered during this long and tedious pilgrimage. To render an adequate description of my sufferings and trials would far exceed my feeble ability; suffice it to say, that, after many and repeated efforts, I reached the Pigwacket country,* where I suspended my travels a few days, to

* Something about the Pigwacket country, probably its euphonious name, fascinated travelers as well as poets and prose-writers for more than a cen-

recruit, in some degree, my exhausted strength and spirits. Obtaining by this delay some renovation of vigor, I proceeded to collect a few necessaries, and then prosecuted the tardy way, till I had passed the English settlements. But now was I frequently put to my trumps to trace the most direct course toward the Indian encampments, which, as yet, were thirty miles distant. And to complete my distresses, I was necessitated to pass several uncomfortable nights in the howling wilderness, where the frequent yellings of the wild beasts inspired ideas of horror and amazement. However, after surmounting many obstacles, I had the good fortune to procure the company of some English hunters a small part of the remaining way.

Thus I pursued my course, 'till certain footsteps, and other vestiges, indicated my proximity to the frontiers of the Indian settlements. No long time supervened, ere ascending a great hill, I had a view, for the first time, of their camps and wigwams in Sudbury, Canada. But the uncouth appearance of those wretched habitations inspired my imagination with a kind of awe, not knowing what sort of reception I should find among the rude and uncultivated sons of nature, their inmates. . . .

tury. Its limits are hard to determine; it is usually said to have been in Maine, although a contemporary map applies the name to places in New Hampshire. O. W. Holmes, in *Elsie Venner,* Chapter III, invents a town called Pigwacket Centre. "Lovewell's Fight," in the old ballad, took place (1725) on Saco Pond, and the balladist sings:

" 'Twas nigh unto Pigwacket, on the eighth day of May,
They spied a rebel Indian soon after break of day."—*E.P.*

It was now the beginning of June, 1772, the trees had assumed a rich foliage, nature wore a most pleasing aspect, and the voice of the nightingale was melodious through the groves. The mildness of the present evening had been joyous to me in health, but now I was unable to relish its comforts. The whole scene was in contrast with my feelings, since weakness and lassitude had produced a general apathy with regard to every surrounding object.

On my arrival near the entrance of one of the wigwams, I was descried by several of the savages, who came out, with uncouth signs and gestures, to welcome me into their homely cabins. Being quite unacquainted, at that time, with the Indian language, I was unable to comprehend a single particle of their discourse; but they presently brought several others, who could speak English, though broken yet intelligible. With these people I conversed several hours, informing them of my indisposition, and how I had taken a long and tiresome journey, on purpose to reside among them. That my motives were founded on the hopes I had entertained of regaining my health through their assistance. They expressed great willingness to receive me, provided their leading men, into whose presence I was to be introduced the next day, should have no objections.

During the first night I was treated in a friendly and obliging manner, but the supper, which was prepared principally, as I imagined, for me, I by no means relished;

though out of complaisance to my host, I endeavored to partake of it freely, knowing that they would of course, be offended at the omission. The repast consisted of smoked venison only, fried a little in fat, but without salt, bread and every kind of sauce whatever. A considerable time elapsed before I could accommodate my palate to such uninviting fare. The friendly behavior of the Indians, however, so far dispelled all apprehensions of uncivil usage, which I had entertained so unjustly to their prejudice, that I slept the first night with tolerable composure. My bed was composed entirely of bear skins, that were spread on the floor for my better accommodation.

The next day I was escorted to the chieftain's wigwam; this was built in a style superior to that of the others. It was a structure of some curiosity, being ornamented with many rude drafts and pictures of men, various other animals and implements of war. These devices appeared (as was obvious) extremely magnificent in the eyes of this unpolished people.

On my approach, their chief, whose name was Swanson, gave me a very cordial reception, and presently ordered his domestics to prepare dinner. Meanwhile we commenced a prolix confabulation, in the course of which I acquainted him with my circumstances, and the design I had formed of residing in Canada for a season. He seemed pleased with my intentions, and gave me free toleration to abide in his tribe during pleasure. To these

instances of benignity he superadded another, which was to enjoin Molly Occut, at that time the great Indian doctress, to superintend the recovery of my health. At my departure he gave me a general invitation to visit his house whenever I saw fit, or might stand in need of his assistance, and this I assured him I should never fail to do.

Those formalities over, I felt myself at liberty to shape my conduct, as inclination or convenience might dictate. Recovery of health was my first and earliest concern, so I made direct application to the lady for such medicines as might be suitable to my complaints. She was alert in her devoirs, and supplied me for present consumption, with a large variety of roots, herbs, barks and other materials. I did not much like even the looks of them; for to have contemplated an encounter with the formidable forrage might have staggered the resolution, doubtless, of a much greater hero than myself. However I took the budget with particular directions for the use of each ingredient.

My kind doctress visited me daily, bringing new medicinal supplies, but my palate was far from being gratified with some of her doses, in fact they but ill accorded with the gust of an Englishman. Nevertheless having much faith in the skill of my physician, I continued to swallow with becoming submission, every potion she prescribed.

Her means had a timely and beneficial effect, since,

from the use of them, I gathered strength so rapidly, that in two months, I could visit about with comfort.

Returning health inspired my breast with new-born hope, and was a source of lasting consolation. And now curiosity prompting me to visit the Indian settlements in this department, in order to become more intimately acquainted with their customs and modes of life, I followed the daily practice of traveling from place to place, until I had visited the whole encampment, and from the best conjectures I could frame on the subject, found there might be about three hundred inhabitants in this quarter. The entire tribe, of which these people made a part, was in number about seven hundred of both sexes, and extended their settlements, in a scattering, desultory manner, from lake Memphremagog to lake Umbagog, covering an extent of some eighty miles. Finding traveling to agree with my feelings I continued the salutary exercise, every day, for several months, until my health was restored in as full and perfect a manner, as I had possessed that blessing at any former period. This happy restoration to pristine ability I attributed principally to the good offices of my doctoress, who during my convalescence, was indefatigable in her care and attention. Her character was, indeed, that of a kind and charitable woman. As a specimen of this I will relate an incident, that took place a short time subsequent to my arrival.

There was a certain poor, white man, who lived in Pigwacket, and had a large family, which by reason of his

indigence and the dearth of provisions, he was quite unable to supply with food. So great was the scarcity at that time of bread-corn, the staff of life, that no pay would procure it except money. Of this he was wholly destitute, so that himself and family were reduced to great straits, and literally in danger of starving. This man had used sometimes to visit the Indians for the benefit of hunting, trading, etc., by which means he had contracted some acquaintance with them, and had heard that Molly Occut always kept on hand a considerable quantity of money. As he knew not, in this his extremity, what other means to pursue, he took a journey into the Indian country, and straightway applied to Molly to obtain a loan of about twenty dollars, while the ensuing winter. She rallied him on the score of his coming to borrow of the poor Indians, who (she said) were generally despised by the white people. Nevertheless she loaned him the money, but charged him to come the next winter and hunt furs to refund her the sum. This he promised, and performed very exactly, for the winter following, he came sure enough, and was so lucky as to collect a sufficient quantity of furs to repay his benefactress, and had remaining some overplus for the relief of his own family. But to quit digression: I had now been in these northern regions nearly half a year, and the warmth of summer had receded to make way for winter's unrelenting reign. The severity of the weather had already become intolerable; yet the savages seemed to pay so little regard to the

cold piercing blast, that one would have been tempted to consider them as insensible of feeling as their native oaks and pines. For my own part I was inclined to keep pretty much within doors, wishing to render life as agreeable as possible. My food which was chiefly smoked venison, had given me for a while much horror and disgust, but by use and habit it had grown, at length, more savory, insomuch that I now thought it preferable to salted provision. I procured, notwithstanding, from time to time, a small supply of salt, corn, potatoes and other vegetables from one or other of the natives, who were so friendly as to bestow on me, not unfrequently, even what they needed for their own subsistence. They thought me, perhaps, less able than themselves to dispense with such requisites.

Since beginning to amend in health under the auspices of madam Molly, I had formed a design of studying the Indian practice of physic, though my intention had hitherto remained a profound secret. Indeed I had paid strict attention to everything of a medical nature, which had fallen within the sphere of my notice. Frequently was I inquisitive with Molly Occut, old Plilips, Sabattus and other professed doctors to learn the names and virtues of their medicines. In general they were explicit in communication, still I thought them in possession of secrets they cared not to reveal.

Knowing them to be extravagantly fond of rum, of which I had seen flagrant specimens, it struck my mind,

that if I could procure a quantity of that liquor with which to treat them occasionally, I should doubtless obtain their favor more effectually than by any other method. But I had no way to procure [sic] money for the purchase, except by hunting with the Indians or setting traps, wherefore to such expeditions I resolved to have recourse. Already had I received pressing invitations to accompany their hunting parties, so that (though hitherto had I declined such proposals) I anticipated no obstacle to the accomplishment of my design. The rigor of the winter was yet too severe for my feelings, but as I had often found profit from being in a state of readiness, I took care to provide a fusee, with good store of amunition. And no sooner had the inclemency of the atmosphere abated in some degree, than I joined a number of the hunters, who were about setting out in quest of moose, deer and such other game, as might come to hand. We stayed out upwards of a week; our custom being to traverse the woods in almost every direction, during the day, and at the approach of night, to strike up a large fire, and lie down upon hemlock boughs, with each man a blanket, but no other covering, than such as the canopy of heaven afforded. To me these hardships were quite irksome; I wished them at an end, although we had very good success in our business, for beside killing several moose and deer, we acquired a variety of fur animals. On return to the camps the booty was equalized, in usual manner, among the hunting adventurers.

After this I continued the same pursuits throughout the remainder of the season, which ends usually in April or May, and my dividend of the furs sold for about thirty dollars.

As divers English people used occasionally to visit us to purchase furs and the like, I disposed of my share to those visitants; and among other articles procured ten gallons of rum, with which I regaled a number of my Indian friends, as long as it lasted. By this exploit I so far engaged their good will and gratitude, that no sooner did I acquaint them with my desire to learn the healing art, than they promised me every instruction in their power, which, subsequent to this I ever found them ready to afford.

Having thus far succeeded in my favorite scheme, I henceforth devoted the greater part of my time to the study of Indian botany and physic, and being naturally possessed of a strong retentive memory, I made rapid proficiency under such skillful guides. My studies were rarely interrupted, except when I was obliged to hunt or attend to my traps; but to such kind of drudgeries I was forced sometimes to submit, in order to procure furs to purchase necessaries, the use of which I was unable or unwilling to forego.

Chapter VIII

THE DAUGHTER OF KING TUMKIN

Venus presents me with a miss,
Who proves a source of present bliss;
Yet, tho' in manners wild and rude,
Know, pretty belles, she was no prude.

Now had the more vertical rays of propitious Phœbus subdued the rigors of the inclement year, and transformed the surly, hiemal blasts into pleasing zephyrus gales. Already had he renewed the beauties of the vernal bloom, and restored to the animate world the festive joys of a mild atmosphere. These were circumstances most congenial to my feelings. Already had I acquired such competent skill in the Indian dialect, as to be able to converse freely with the natives, and had moreover formed a personal acquaintance with most of them belonging to the vicinity, particularly so with Polly Susap, the niece of old king Tumkin Hagen, who inhabited near the borders of lake Umbagog. Upon this young squaw, who appeared more beautiful in my eyes, than any other female of her whole tribe, I had placed all my desires, and bestowed much of my attention. From time to time I had presented her with many little tokens of my love and esteem, till, by such assiduities, I attracted her notice, and capti-

vated her fondest affections. From that time forth, she was always desirous of my company, and I was much in hers. As I was a frequent visitor at her father's hut, we had many opportunities of conversing together, and when I went into the forest, with Molly Occut or others, to collect vegetables, or for whatever purpose, she was generally a sure attendant in the train.

Her parents observed our growing partiality with much complacency, and fondly looked forward to that epoch, when they hoped to see us joined in the bands of wedlock. But to concur with propositions of that nature was foreign from my wishes, since I allotted to make no permanent residence in the society of this people.

My principal and indeed sole inducement in cultivating the friendship of this young woman, or if you please, savage, was to remedy the want of a female companion, while in these rude regions. It is the nature of man to need such helps and conveniences, as smooth the asperities and soften the rugged condition of life, and intercourse with the sex is not the smallest of those advantages. I have often heard it observed of a sailor, that he has a wife in every port, and indeed, at the time here spoken of, I supposed myself entitled to a like privilege, though belonging to a different element. However this might be, I successfully prosecuted my amour with the aforesaid beautiful savage, who now supplied to me the place of a wife, though without the fashionable appellation. By her unwearied condescension she rendered my abode, in this

unpleasant wilderness, much more tolerable, furnishing me with many of the comforts and necessaries of life. My frequent rambles abroad and tedious hours at home were enlivened with her social company. Whether my employment happened to be hunting, or visiting traps, she was a careful follower of my footsteps, or faithful attendant at my side. . . .

Amid the pursuits I have been describing, the second summer, since my arrival here, had taken its flight, and dreary winter, robed in snow, had again displayed its forbidding form.

It being altogether problematical how much longer I should abide in these parts, and my desire being ardent to acquire some further acquaintance with the situation of this extensive country, before taking a final leave of it, I purposed availing of the very first opportunities to explore it east and west.

Early in February, which is the commencement of the main hunting season, I was positive several parties would set out in quest of moose and deer, because on the improvement of this season, depends, in good measure, their livelihood for the whole year. With a view of joining some or other of those hunters, I carefully provided myself with whatever necessaries might be had, and when the time for departure arrived, we set out loaded with steel and squat-traps, guns, hatchets, ammunition and snowshoes; those accoutrements making up the bigger part of our luggage; since with itinerary provisions we

were very little incommoded, our whole viaticum consisting of only a morsel of salt, and a mere trifle of smoked or frozen venison. But, though our dependence for sustenance was altogether on the fruits of the chase, yet were we in no great jeopardy of famishing, for the sagacity of the hunters in starting game, and their dexterity in running it down with their dogs, far exceeds anything of the kind known among civilized people. Our daily stages were from twelve to twenty miles only, except when the heat of the chase tempted us to exceed those limits, as was sometimes the case.

What I disliked most of all, was our cold, uncomfortable mode of lodging, which absolutely forbade the reception of much repose. Our only accommodation of this sort was a parcel of hemlock or spruce twigs thrown upon the snow, on which we lay down, before a large fire, rolled up in our blankets. In this expedition, however, we met with extraordinary good fortune, killing a variety of moose, deer, bears, saple, minks, raccoons, wolverines, etc., and in the course of it visiting lake Memphremagog, and the Indians residing in that department.

After we had collected, as we supposed, a sufficient quantity of meat and skins to serve present exigencies, and had secured, Indian like, such materials, as were more cumbersome, we returned home, loaded with as many of the most valuable and portable articles, as we could well carry; leaving moreover in bass and pine troughs (for the purpose of freezing) several large par-

cels of moose and other wild meat, which we allotted to convey home at a more convenient season.

This winter, also, I took another excursion eastwardly, visited lake Umbagog, and made some acquaintance with old king Tumkin Hagen, who was at the head of the whole tribe. The dress of his family was somewhat gaudy, especially that of his wife, who was adorned with nose and ear jewels, and bracelets on her arms; besides a variety of trinkets and gewgaws decorating the other parts of her body. I tarried here several days, and received, during my stay, the politest attention, both from the king and his household. . . .

On a certain day, in the beginning of April, 1774, having sojourned in this place almost two years, I went out towards Androscoggin river, in company with one Indian only. We carried a number of steel and squat-traps to set for saple, and other furred animals. When placing the machinery, I asked the Indian if he was willing to go shares with me in the game. He shook his head, and said, "No." We returned home, and the next day went out, as before, to visit the traps. On arrival it appeared that my success had been greater than his; but he wanted to share stakes, though he had refused my proposal to that purpose but the day before. I reminded him of his refusal then, and told him, on that account, I should decline doing the like now. Not satisfied with my reasoning, he insisted on an equal division of the game, while I as strongly remonstrated against the impropriety of his re-

quest. At length finding himself unable to gain my compliance, he grew infuriate, and holding up his tomahawk, made motions, as if in the act of hurling it at my head. At this moment I had no weapon of defense, having laid aside my fusee to unload the traps. I was fully sensible of the imminent danger I was in from the deadly weapon of so dextrous an adversary, and despaired of being able to evade the blow, in case he should let fly the fatal instrument. I had now no means of safety, but in my endeavors to assuage his turbulence, at least till I could recover my gun. This device I essayed to practice, by accosting him in the most soothing terms, intreating him to do me no violence, and I would comply with his wishes. Pacified, in some measure, by those concessions, he dropped his meancing attitude, and stepped up, as if to divide the spoil. This afforded me time to recover my fusee, seizing which, I hastily cocked and presented it at his breast, bidding him drop his tomahawk instantly, or I would finish him upon the spot. Seeing my resolution the savage was appalled, and threw away his offensive weapon, which I gathered up speedily, and then drove him, as a prisoner, into the camps.

Each of us carried his own game, but at the moment of return, the offended savage repaired to the rulers, and entered a complaint against me. Whereupon, a counsel of inquiry being called, my antagonist came forward, and accused me of maltreatment and abuse, to wit, of defrauding him in the division of the game, of menacing

his life, and of disarming and driving him, prisoner like, into the camps. Soon as I had permission to speak, I made my defense by stating the particulars, just as they occurred. The assembly was attentive, and after a patient hearing of all we had to say, the senior Indians held a sort of consultation, which over, one of them, addressing the complainant, delivered a long harangue, in substance, though not precisely, in the terms following.

At the first coming of this white man to reside among us, we received him with open arms, adopted him as a brother, and promised him hospitality and good usage, during his sojournment in our land. You, in particular, were not remiss in showing him offices of kindness and humanity. Encouraged by such tokens of our friendship, he has abode here a long time, and we hoped his confidence in us would never be shaken, especially by the ill treatment he should receive from any of our nation. But we are sorry to learn, that our hopes in this have been wholly defeated, by the late contention that has arisen betwixt you. We have heard all you had to say (respectively) in vindication of your conduct, and now we desire to render you both due justice, yet without partiality to either.

It has long been the privilege of our hunters to enjoy unmolested the fruits and effects of their individual exertions, whether acquired by successful stratagem, or the more arduous toils of the chase. That our English brother is entitled to like advantages none will deny. With what

view, then, did you require partition of *his spoils?* That a prior agreement, for that purpose, existed between you, we have no evidence, save your own assertion, which is inadmissible, in cases of this kind. For those reasons we consider you culpable, not only for requesting a part of his game, but for threatening his life and safety, seeing it was your duty to protect both.

But now listen to that part of our discourse, which more especially challenges your attention. We, the elders and chiefs of our nation, wishing to prevent a repetition of such disorderly conduct, and resolving to punish its perpetration in future, do strictly prohibit your further attempts to the prejudice of this stranger; for in case you be known, henceforth, to do him the least injury, we assure you beforehand, that we will bend down a young sapling, lash your legs fast to the top of it, and then, suffering the tree to recover its former position, will leave you hanging by the heels, as a spectacle of wretchedness, till death.

Such was the sentence they pronounced against the offender, and I firmly believe they would have put it in execution, had he afterwards rendered me the least essential mischief. This, however he attempted not, yet I perceived his secret enmity, and was fully convinced of his desires to obtain a bloody revenge. For that reason I was obliged to be very circumspect in my conduct for fear of some personal damage. Though here I would mention, that several months after, happening to have

spirituous liquor, I sent for the same Indian, and gave him a good portion, at which mark of civility he was so highly pleased, that he told me, he should be glad to drop the animosity, and drink with me in friendship, which being as ready to do as himself, we agreed to bury the hatchet, and live in amity for the future. From the time of this settlement he appeared an altered man, and his behavior toward me was quite different.

This same spring I was out upon a hunting match with another Indian, when, happening to espy a female deer at some small distance, I leveled my piece, and dropped her dead upon the spot. The Indian ran toward the game, but presently called aloud for my approach. Drawing near, I descerned, in the bushes, about a rod from the deer, a large buck lying dead also. On examination it appeared, that I had killed both of them at the same shot, though the buck had been invisible at the time of fire.

All this while I had pursued my courtship with pretty Polly, but her parents began now to be importunate for our union. They urged the unusual length of our courtship, and said it was high time to think of marrying, if we intended to follow the worthy example of their ancestors. I excused the matter by saying I wished to procure, first, a better Indian habit; but Polly's mother thought my dress good enough, and insisted upon a speedy consummation of the nuptials. This pertinacity of theirs put me to numerous shifts, but at last it was

agreed to let the affair rest, till such time, as I should procure a more fashionable apparel, corresponding with the etiquette of the country. But here I leave my fond companion to speak of other particulars.

It had long been an approved custom, among the savages of Sudbury, to visit Quebec, every spring of the year. All who had ability were desirous of performing this necessary duty. The principal motives of such journeys were the purchase of absolution of sin, and to have the souls of deceased friends prayed out of purgatory. Those spiritual benefits the Roman catholic priests and friars had taught the Indians to consider, as of very essential consequence, but for favors of this kind they had to pay in furs or money, and sometimes at a very dear rate. Many were the egregious frauds and impositions practiced by those selfish, hypocritical beings upon the poor, ignorant Indians, as I have heard them frequently complain, notwithstanding which they still continued their visits every spring, though the travel was one hundred and sixty miles.

However the Indians had other purposes to subserve, (beside the spiritual ones above mentioned) by those vernal expeditions to Quebec; for thither, at such season of the year, they practiced the conveyance of their winter hunt of furs, with which they purchased blankets, muskets, ammunition, and other warlike implements; the rest of their conveniences being obtained from the New England settlements. About the beginning of May, this year,

a considerable party, laden with furs, as customary, set out for Quebec, but now Molly Occut herself made one of the itinerants. Her motives, in undertaking so troublesome an expedition, were the pardon of her own sins, and the strong desire she had that the soul of her deceased husband should be prayed out of purgatory. He had been dead several years, and she had hitherto neglected to discharge this pious duty. Resolving to atone now for former remissness, she set out, as above, with the rest of the company, and with a valuable pack of furs at her back. After an absence of two weeks they returned, bringing home divers articles, which they had in exchange for their furs. On arrival several of the adventurers recounted, in my hearing, a pretty ludicrous anecdote of the worthy doctoress. It related to a transaction that took place between her and a certain Catholic priest, at the time of his praying her husband out of purgatory. On account of the drollery of the incident I will here insert it.

Molly having disposed of her furs for cash, about forty dollars, was not forgetful of the pious purposes of her journey, so with several others, she went directly to a priest, and acquainted him with her wishes, requesting to know the sum he should ask for performing the godly services. The crafty priest, knowing the sum she had recently received, demanded the whole forty dollars, and insisted on the money being told down, previous to his entrance on the sacred duties. With this unreasonable

request she complied, though with some reluctance, and then the treacherous old Levite, with much pretended sanctity, began the solemn farce. In the first instance he gave her pardon and absolution, and next undertook to petition for the departed soul of her late husband. At length making a finish of his foolish ceremony, he informed her that the business was happily completed, and that her husband's soul was safely delivered from the bonds of purgatory. She, however, was very particular in her inquiries, whether he were certainly clear or not. The old priest asseverated repeatedly that he was absolutely free. On this she scraped the money off the table into the corner of her blanket, and tying it up was about to depart. The priest somewhat nettled, demanded the meaning of her maneuver, and threatened to remand her husband back to purgatory, unless she gave him the money. Her reply was that she knew her husband too well to believe it in a priest's power to do that, for (added she) my husband was always a very prudent man. I have often observed, when we used to traverse the woods together, if he chanced to fall into a bad place, he always stuck up a stake, that he might never be caught there any more. Without further ado, she made the best of her way off, leaving the poor ecclesiastic to console himself for the loss of the money in the best manner he could.

But to continue my own story—The late expeditions I had accomplished had impeded for a spell, my medical improvements; though I was far from losing sight of that

favorite object, and now when Molly had returned from Quebec, and I was more at leisure, I renewed my intense application to medicinal inquiries; generally attending my patroness, when she visited her patients, gaining, by those means, a much better insight into the Indian methods of cure than had otherwise been possible.

I fondly hoped to reap the benefit of all my acquirements at some future period, and my expectations have not been wholly abortive. Indeed, frequently since, has the little medical skill I possessed procured me a night's lodging, or a morsel of bread, which otherwise I had dearly wanted.

The third summer since my residence in these barbarous regions now came on apace, moderating the intemperature of the cold northern latitudes and dissipating the huge masses of snow; these to me were no unjoyous circumstances, for not being so well inured to excessive hardships, as the Indians, I frequently suffered much in their company, not only from the inclemency of the weather, but also from the want of suitable apparel.

During this summer my pursuits were much of the same tenor, as those above related. However, in the course of it, one occurrence happened that requires a more particular recital because it affected my feelings so greatly at the time, and my health so considerably afterwards, that scarce ever can it be erased from my memory.

On a certain day, about midsummer, I went a distance into the forest, with several other hunters, in quest of a

little venison. In the course of our travels I separated from the rest of the company, intending to join it again upon occasion. Not being acquainted sufficiently with the country, and the atmosphere becoming cloudy, I mistook the way, and wandered about (unconscious whither) till approach of night. When not hearing any tidings of the Indians, I struck up a fire and lay myself down before it, in hopes to take some little repose. But in this I was disappointed, for not being used to encamp alone in such a dismal wilderness, I was in constant dread of being torn in pieces by the wild beasts of prey. Their terrific notes and echoing responses, forming altogether a most horrid melody, which assailed me from all points of the compass, and sometimes within a stone's throw of my encampment. The night seemed almost an age, and when morning appeared, I knew not which way to shape my course, as it still continued cloudy and rainy. What added to my distress was, I had no sort of provision to satisfy the craving of appetite, for by traveling and fasting for twenty-four hours together, I already began to feel quite feeble.

Conscious it could answer no good end to remain in my camp, I set out, early in the morning and traveled the whole day, greatly fatigued, without finding food, other than leaves and a few wild berries. When night overtook me, a second time, I was still utterly at a loss to know where I was, or which way to proceed on the morrow. With those gloomy prospects before my eyes, I kindled

up a fire to warm and dry my weary limbs; but hunger and anxiety became so poignant, and the howling of the savage beasts so dismally terrifying, that I received very little refreshment from sleep. Next morning the sun rose clear, and I trusted in being fortunate enough, in the course of the day, to find some settlement, where possibly the means of preserving me from famishing might be procured. With fainting hopes indeed, but with the utmost exertion, I took the direction most likely to answer my purpose, but my expectations were again foiled, for the third night arrived without bringing the smallest prospect of relief.

By this time the reader may well suppose, I was so far debilitated with hunger and fatigue as seriously to apprehend inevitable death in this woody labyrinth. The greater part of this night was spent in considering what steps I should pursue on the approaching dawn. At last I came to a resolution to steer a southerly course, which, of necessity, must conduct me to some English settlements, before I should have traveled, at farthest, one hundred miles. But how to accomplish a journey of such extent, under present disadvantages, was the fearful question. The very thought of it seemed to stagger my utmost resolution and dishearten my wishes. Yet I thought it more eligible to proceed, than to lie down without a struggle, and await the hour of dissolution. Accordingly, the next morning I prosecuted my travels southwardly, guiding my steps, by the help of the sun, in

the best manner possible. I proceeded this day, as far as I found myself in any capacity of traveling, being convinced, that of consequence I must grow weaker, every day, upon such miserable ailments, as the wilderness afforded; for, as yet I had caught no living thing, not even a squirrel.

As soon as night, for the fourth time, overtook me, I struck up a fire, as usual, by the help of my gun, which as yet though with great difficulty, I had made shift to carry. This night was more painful to me, than any of the preceding, for although the raging keenness of hunger had in some measure abated, without being satisfied, yet a faint, listless weakness, with incessant griping pains, had succeeded. The ensuing day I renewed my journey with scarcely surviving strength to enable me to drag along my debilitated limbs. Having traveled two or three miles, as near as I could guess, to my great joy, I was so fortunate as to strike into a hunting path, following which, I found the Indian encampment from whence I had wandered.

My arrival was about evening twilight. Thus after having wandered in the lonely deserts, without food, for five whole days and four nights, did fortune conduct me to my kind Indian friends; an event much to their satisfaction, as well as my own. Upon reflection it appeared, that my distance from the settlements had not been so remote, as my apprehensions had painted, and that, in all probability, the different circuitous direction, I had mean-

dered, during the overcast weather, had consumed the above period, as no other hypothesis would account for my arrival at the time above noted. However this misfortune gave me a distaste against hunting in future, and it was several months, ere I gained the entire re-establishment of my health.

After the above, nothing memorable befell me during the residue of that summer, but, in the winter ensuing, I began to harbor serious thoughts of leaving this rude, though hospitable people, and of returning to the land of my nativity. I had already seen as much of the manners and customs of the Canadians, as I wished; had become acquainted with their language, and had acquired (as I conceived) such a competent share of medical knowledge, as might enable me to practice physic with some prospect of success. For those reasons I formed a design of quitting the country sometime in the spring ensuing, or whenever the weather and traveling should permit.

Chapter IX

CUSTOMS OF THE COUNTRY

To ridicule we're strongly prone,
All other customs, save our own.—

MEANWHILE, before taking leave of a people, among whom I had continued so long, and from whom I had received, generally speaking, much hospitality, I do not think it amiss to give a brief account of some few of their more singular and remarkable customs, in addition to those already noticed. In doing this I shall confine myself to the mention of such particulars only, as ocular demonstration will enable me to avouch.

The Indians of lower Canada are straight in stature, but of a slender make. Their eyes are black, quick and piercing, and their features regularly shaped. The color of their skin is reddish, similar to that of tanned leather. Their motions are deliberate and their dispositions, the general affect of ignorance, prone to suspicion. They are always on the lookout, as though apprehensive of danger; are generally hospitable to strangers, from whom they have received no offense; but their thirst of revenge, when they have experienced the least injury, is insatiable beyond comparison. In fine, being unpolished and naturally capricious, they are ticklish, uncertain friends, as well as dangerous enemies.

In the article of dress they are proud and gaudy, when of ability to procure finery. Their garb is thin and loose, and various parts of the body are suffered to remain quite naked, even in winter. Their principal clothing however, is a small coarse blanket thrown over the shoulders, and tied about the waist with a wampum girdle. On their head they usually wear, in cold weather, a fur cap, and frequently a small strip of saple or other skin round the neck. They have a sort of buskins that reach above the knee, with moccasins on their feet; and lastly, a small piece of cloth, called a band, fastened round the middle. The particulars above enumerated constitute their ordinary dress, their arms and thighs being bare at all seasons.

They are so inured to cold and hardships, that they will lie down in deep snows, before a fire, each rolled up in a small blanket, sleeping comfortably all night; their diet being whatever they may chance to catch during their rambles.

As their reliance is principally upon hunting and fishing, the plenty or scarcity of food among them is altogether a matter of uncertainty, depending pretty much upon the fortunate successes of the chase.

When provisions are scarce, they are sometimes, from necessity abstemious and sparing, but, on the contrary, in times of plenty, they are constitutionally profuse and excessive, both in eating and drinking, devouring, at such seasons, as much at once, as might have sufficed for several days.

In winter they preserve their meat by freezing it in bass or pine troughs. Their method of seasoning it in summer is the following: they cut it into quarters or joints, and hang it upon poles, three or four feet above the surface of the earth. When collecting a mixture of old withered leaves, dry rubbish and green boughs of pine or hemlock, they set fire to the mass, and continue the fumigation till it has thoroughly penetrated the meat, and the outside becomes hard and seared. This process requires usually two or three days and nights; after which their venison will keep, without putrefaction, a whole year. When I had become familiarized to the use of smoked meat, I esteemed it more savory, than that which had been preserved by freezing; as the latter, when destitute of salt, became excessively nauseating and disgustful to the palate.

One pernicious practice to which those poor people were miserably addicted, as I had frequent opportunities of witnessing, and which was one great cause of their wretchedness, was their excessive fondness for spirituous liquors; with which they were supplied, for the most part, by the New England traders. Such was their insatiable thirst for the fatally intoxicating potion, that they would cheerfully barter away, in purchase of it, their most valuable furs, even after encountering every incredible hardship, of cold, hunger and fatigue, in their acquirement. Frequently have I remonstrated with them on the folly and impropriety of this conduct, but without making any lasting impression upon their minds. Whenever they

happened to procure a supply of rum, from that moment, while it lasted, all business was wholly laid aside, and the most horrible and alarming scenes immediately took place. At such intervals I was obliged to be extremely cautious for fear of being assassinated, or at least wounded in the fury of their bacchanalian revels; dancing, whooping, singing, fighting and drinking, making up, alternately, the circle of their phrenzical amusements.

The slightest affront, on those occasions, was sufficient to throw them into a state of perfect madness, in which were spared neither friends nor foes. It was not uncommon for those demons, when enraged, to draw their long knives, with which they went usually armed, and with those dangerous weapons to cut and slash one another in the most horrid manner. This I have frequently witnessed, though I never knew anyone actually slain in any of their infernal frays. Once, however, upon a sudden uproar, which arose about the division of some rum, one Indian was so miserably lacerated, that he came near death in consequence. One long gash, in particular, he received below the breast, but luckily for him, the wound was hardly deep enough to let out his intestines. Through the unwearied care of the Indian doctors, his wounds were in time healed.

After those infuriate orgies had subsided, which was never the case till the liquor failed that inspired them, it was not unusual for those votaries of Bacchus to recline indolently in their cabins, for several days upon a stretch,

ere they could assume prowess to shake off the effects of their pernicious surfeit.

Respecting their religious tenets it is difficult to frame suitable conclusions. It appeared on the whole, that they entertained some belief of a supreme Being, but were pretty indifferent as to rendering him any kind of worship. What little they knew of the Christian religion, they had learned (I presume) of the Roman Catholic friars, but their notions, relative to such matters, were a confused jumble of crude, incoherent ideas, about which they seemed to trouble their heads very little, but would notwithstanding, now and then mention. In a word; it appeared in my view, that their religious system was worth very little, and their modes of worship not much removed from a farce.

Their nuptial rites were few and simple, being only the following. As soon as the parties are fully concluded upon the match, and relation had accorded their consent, it was customary for the bridegroom to go and throw a deer's leg into the bride's tent, after which she was wont to throw an ear of corn into his. Those solemnities were intended as symbolical of the appropriate duties of each, and, when duly performed, the marriage was legally consummated. Although I have frequently been told of the many ceremonies practiced by the Indians on such occasions, yet the above were the only material ones occurring within my notice. After marriage they generally hold their festivals and days of visiting and rejoicing. When

they sleep together the man's head is placed at the woman's feet, and vice versa. This position, however, I presume, is not always the same. Before marriage they are a *little* prone to incontinence; but very few instances of matrimonial infidelity are to be found among them, as they entertain a peculiar veneration for the sanctity of the nuptial covenant, and severely punish its violation by their laws, which require that the end of the culprit's nose shall be amputated.

When they lose a friend or relative, by death, their grief and lamentations are great and unfeigned. They spare neither cost nor pains to celebrate the funeral obsequies of the defunct with all possible pomp and solemnity. I have, a number of times, partly out of curiosity, been present at those solemn spectacles, and have observed them with some attention. There is scarce any end to the multiplex ceremonies they think necessary to perform at the time of interment. The most material of which are the following. Having carried the corpse to the grave, they lament over it a while with loud complaints and bitter howlings, which are accompanied, also, with extraordinary gestures and violent contortions of body. This over, they place, in the grave, the deceased, with his body in an erect posture, wrapped up in a blanket, and dressed out as usual. They then put his fusil into his arms, his pipe into his mouth, and deposit, by his side, a sufficient quantity of tobacco, powder, balls, steel, tinder and provisions; these were undoubtedly designed to enable him

to perform the long and tedious journey he had to encounter. Having done everything which they suppose might contribute, in the least, to his benefit or comfort, they cover him up, in an artificial manner, with wood, stones and earth, taking care, that the body be incommoded with none of the materials. In this manner are the rites of sepulture executed.

After performance of the above and other ceremonies (all being deemed indispensable) the spectactors are allowed to return back, and partake of a feast provided on this solemn occasion. . . .

It being my conclusion, as already stated, to quit these territories, and return to New Hampshire, as soon as the traveling should become good, which I supposed would be the case, sometime in the month of May, ensuing; and that time drawing near, I began to make preparations for departure. Calling to mind, however, the many kindnesses I had received from these uncultivated people, I had a desire before bidding a final farewell to the country, to treat for the last time, such of them, as had conferred on me the greater obligations.

To this end I purchased five gallons of rum; when, inviting a round number to my hut, I gave it to them to drink, with which token of civility they were extravagantly gratified.

I also acquainted Polly Susap, (my marriage with whom I had by various devices procrastinated to this period) that I was under an indispensable necessity of re-

turning to my native land, for the purpose of settling business of importance to myself there. At these tidings she appeared greatly afflicted; and, to console her I was compelled to make reiterated assurances, that I would return to her embraces, on the wings of love, the first favorable moment.

Thus having made every necessary arrangement, I was ready for the prosecution of my journey. Wasting no time therefore, as the footing was already tolerable, I took leave of my old friends, and departed from Sudbury, Canada, on the way towards Lee, the place of my ancient abode. This occurrence took place about the last of May, 1775, after a residence with the Canadians of nearly three years. Several of them escorted me about fifty miles, that is to say, as far as Pigwacket, where, with some fur skins, I purchased two gallons of rum, and a large roll of tobacco, both of which articles I presented my Indian guides, and accepted their hearty thanks in return.

And now having been so long absent from my family, and friends at Lee, I felt an ardent desire to visit them without longer procrastination. Accordingly, being in good health and spirits, I pursued my way so briskly, as soon to reach that town, where I had the satisfaction of finding all my concerns well.

As my friends had received no certain intelligence respecting me, during my long absence, they had begun to foster doubts of my welfare; so that my sudden appearance, at this time, was a matter of surprise to them all;

nor was it diminished by the account I gave them of the various scenes I had passed through, while resident in Canada.

Upon inquiry I now learned, that, for the greater part of her three years abandonment, my wife had been reduced to many difficulties to sustain herself and children, in any tolerable manner. At hearing those things I was exceedingly chagrined, though there seemed little probability that her condition would be meliorated by my present return. In fact, the wilds of Canada were but a scurvy place, in which to gather riches; so that I had come home, save a store of health, as empty handed, as I went. To this may be added, that by so long an abidance among the slothful Indians, I had contracted (it was obvious) a habit of indolence, that unfitted me for laborious employments, and this at a time when unwearied efforts were necessary for the support of myself and family.

BOOK TWO

Chapter I

THE REVOLUTION: PRIVATE TUFTS

Lo! martial clarions, sounding from afar,
Excite the supine, and arouse to war.

DURING my Canadian adventures, the horrors of a civil war had burned forth between England and her colonies in America. In consequence of this, orders for the enlistment of troops to join our armies were frequent in most places. Being by nature volatile, and prone to novelty, I was strongly impelled to become acquainted with a military life. This my fancy portrayed, as the best method of supporting self and family, in a way consistent with beloved ease, and at the same time, as, certainly more honorable than thievish pursuits, though a soldier in fact, may be a thief.

Soon, therefore, I left home, and meeting with Captain Clarke, enlisted into his company for two months. We were marched directly to Portsmouth,* and employed in the building and repairing of forts, in the vicinity of that town. I served as cook to part of the company, and tarried the whole time of enlistment, without desertion.

* Henry Tufts is named as a private soldier in Capt. Smith Emerson's company (Elijah Denbow, 1st lieut.) on Seavey's Island, Portsmouth Harbour, November 5, 1775. New Hampshire *Provincial Papers*, 14:233.—*E.P.*

One night, however, as I was traveling in the streets of Portsmouth, it was my ill luck to meet with two riflemen, one of whom accosted me with: *"You are the devil, that served us so today."* Not knowing to what he alluded, I inadvertently replied, *"Yes."* At which without more ceremony, he knocked me down with a club; striking out two of my foreteeth, and leaving me for dead in the street. Soon, however, recovering some use of my senses, I made shift, with very great difficulty, to reach a neighboring house, where I tarried till morning. Being determined upon revenge, I loaded my gun at the moment I awaked, and issued forth in quest of the assassin. I found him at Tilton's tavern, and resolved to shoot him instantly. In the broad entry, I met Gen. Sullivan and Col. Cilley,* who, having heard of the abusive treatment I had received, suspected my real motives, and demanded the surrender of my arms. Instead of immediate compliance, I showed my wounds, related the whole adventure, and protested my determination to have recompense. The general said the villain deserved chastisement, and should receive it; still peremptorily ordering me to deliver up my weapons. Not daring to disobey the general, who was our commander in chief, I complied with his injunctions though with reluctance. At that moment, Col. Cilley approached the rascal who had thus maltreated

* John Sullivan, 1740-95; Joseph Cilley, 1735-99. Gen. Sullivan was, at this time, detached from Washington's army, for the defense of Portsmouth. —*E.P.*

me, belabored him soundly with his sword, and ordered him under guard, to the jail in Portsmouth. There he was confined I know not how long, but my term of enlistment having expired, I returned home to Lee, and spent several weeks to little or no advantage. After this, being solicited by Capt. Denbo, I enlisted into his corps for two months more, and was directed to repair to Winter hill, near Boston. Here our troops fared, at times, so slenderly, that we had to atone for the dearth of allowance, by stealing pigs, poultry, and such like articles.

One night I went to Mystic, with two others, and stole a number of dunghill fowls. Just as we had caught and killed them, the owner happened to hear a disturbance among his poultry, and ran out to discover what the fracas might be. I happened to espy him, just as he was stepping out of doors; so to give my comrades a better chance to secrete the plunder, I marched up to the farmer, and made inquiry for some cider. He said he believed somebody had been stealing his poultry. *"Nothing more likely,* (quoth I) *for just now I saw several fellows running down street." "Damn them,* said he, *I believe they have carried off some of my fowls."*

Uttering this, he invited us into the kitchen, and treated us plentifully with cider; we then bid him adieu, and marched off jovially with our feathered booty. On the way back to quarters we picked up a couple of geese more, and made a delicate feast on the whole the same evening; but, the next morning, the proprietor of the

geese paid our commissary a visit, and complained to Capt. Denbo of his loss. The captain told him to search where he pleased, so the farmer made inquiry, till weary of the pursuit, but not being able to track his property, or fasten either upon any one, we had permission to drive him out of the camp; this we exultingly put in execution, pelting him unmercifully with snow balls, and using him, in other respects, I must confess, extremely ill. At the expiration of the two months I was dismissed with the commendation of having behaved as a good soldier, and returned to Lee.

I stayed at home but a short space, ere I once more enlisted, for other two months, under Capt. Folsom, and marched back to Winter Hill. In a few days our company was stationed at Cambridge college, and assisted in building the forts at Lechmore's point;* but, while engaged in this business, we were forced to submit to much hardship, and were extremely exposed to the fire of the enemy the whole time. Provisions being also scarce, we were reduced to half allowance, and obliged to spend part of our wages to prevent absolute starvation.—Not relishing such short commons, I resolved to trick, if possible, something out of the commissary, whose name was Smith. Accordingly, with the connivance of several of the subaltern officers, I went and drew our company's quota of pork for the day, and conveyed it to the place of destination. In a few minutes I returned back to the com-

* Lechmere Point; now East Cambridge.—*E.P.*

missary's quarters, who was yet dealing out provision, when spying on the head of a barrel, a large portion of the side of a hog, weighing about forty pounds, I called out in Mr. Smith's hearing, to James Hall, one of our company, saying, "You lazy devil, why don't you take away our meat? You expect me to do the whole drudgery, but I'll see you hang'd first." The commissary, who heard this rough greeting, turned about in a pet, exclaiming, "What's your meat here for? If you don't take it out of my way in a twinkling, I'll lay an embargo on the transport." As I was to the full as anxious for the speedy removal of the nuisance, as the gentleman himself could be, I thrust the pork through with a stick, in which manner, Hall and I lugged it off very triumphantly, thus easing the unsuspecting commissary of the incumbrance in a trice.

As our wants had been pressing, the officers of the company were by no means offended at my successful stratagem, justly concluding we should need a moderate quantity of rum, while devouring this acquisition; I told them I would undertake to provide that desideratum likewise. So running out of doors with much alacrity, in order to find a suitable tool to dispatch upon the embassy; whom should I meet with but old Hall, the father of him above named. Without preface, I requested him to go to the sutler's, and get us a gallon of rum, but he declined, unless I would furnish him with the money. As it happened I was destitute of the necessary evil, but

knowing Hall to be an illiterate man and very ignorant, I drew from my pocket an old summons, which had been served on me for debt some time before. Presenting this, I told him it was a four dollar bill, and desired him to procure me the rum with all speed, and return the change. His scruples being now removed, he set off to execute his commission, while I, knowing the imposition must be detected by the Sutler, and wishing to make both ends of my project meet, dispatched after Hall another man (whom I let into the secret) with directions to bring away the rum at the moment of its delivery, and before Hall should present his old summons to the tapster. My envoy arrived in the nick of time, and fulfilled articles to a punctilio; but scarce was his back turned, when Hall pulled out the supposed bill to make payment. The sutler, not being familiarized to such odd kind of money, demanded its value. Hall replied it was a four dollar bill, and requested his change. At this the sutler, who was an arch blade, had much ado to repress risibility, but being willing to carry on the joke, and knowing Hall to be a responsible man, told him he was unable to break the bill just then, but would charge the rum and take pay another time. With this answer, Hall went away entirely satisfied, and very honestly returned me the old summons, together with a history of his proceedings; and here the affair rested, for he never discovered the cheat, till called upon by the sutler to make remittances.

We regaled ourselves like lords upon these goodly things, which we devoured with as keen avidity, as

though they had been acquired ever so honestly, while I received the applause of every guest, as well for my zeal, as ingenious contrivance.

Much of a piece with the above was the rest of my conduct, till my discharge and return to Lee. Soon after my arrival at the place last mentioned, I went to Newmarket, where being bantered to wrestle, I accepted the challenge; but, somehow or other, my antagonist's knee was so badly sprained, by a fall I gave him, that he was wholly a cripple for six months, and had a stiff knee ever afterwards.

I was, at this time of life, both strong and athletic; valued myself much, as a wrestler, and was, to boot, quite fond of this exercise, which, however, is a pernicious one, and attended with evil consequences, as experience has proved. A few of the misfortunes, that, first and last, have befallen me, while pursuing these practices, I will here enumerate. At one time I had my wrist put out of place by wrestling; at another, one of my arms was broken; at a third my elbow joint was dislocated, after which my collar bone was broken, and again two of my ribs; all done, at different times, by wrestling.

About this period I went to Wallingford in Vermont, where at the raising of two buildings, was a great wrestling match. A certain mulatto man threw all out who had the *hardiesse* to engage him. At his success he exulted immoderately, and continued calling out to the company to bring in their *trash*. I had been standing, as a quiet spectator the whole time, without a wish to intermeddle

in the business. But at length a number of the bystanders requested me to enter the lists. I declined, to little purpose; they still absolutely insisted upon my taking a turn with the champion, who was yet in possession of the ring, and boasting of his prowess. At last, to gratify the company, I yielded to their persuasions, and approached the ring. My opponent, vaunted excessively, accosting me in terms none of the politest. We engaged with equal animosity, but I had the satisfaction to bring him upon his back, twice successively. He insisted upon a third trial; I complied, but now my antagonist was more unsuccessful than before, for finding himself likely to fall, he clapped out his hand to prevent it. At that moment I struck, his arm with my foot, and snapped it short off. This, for the present cured my hero of his athletic disposition, but I was seriously agitated at his misfortune, and the more so, as I had been the unluckly cause of it. No surgeon being near, I undertook the office of setting the bone, and performed it adroitly; three months, however, elapsed, as I afterwards learned, before the fellow was capable of ordinary labor.

At another time I wrestled with a black fellow (belonging to Col. Smith, of Newmarket) when, unluckily, he was so much hurt by the receipt of a fall I gave him, that he died within the first fortnight. I understood that the poor fellow did not acquaint his master with the true state of the affair, but pretended to have fallen from a hay loft; yet the fact was, as here represented. . . .

Chapter II

PARSON TUFTS

With Mars I quarter spurious grace and zeal,
And, Proteus like, a novel semblance steal.

SINCE my return from Canada, I had followed, occasionally, the practice of physic, more especially when absent from Lee; making use of Indian medicines, and observing their methods of cure. By such expedients I gained, now and then, a few shillings, and was eased of many itinerary expenses, to boot. But the era now commenced in which I was to appear on the theater of action in a new character. This originated from a desire for novelty, and partly from a strange notion that took me of assuming the deportment of a religious convert. My new metamorphosis was quite sudden, and had its rise from the following circumstances.

A set of religionists, styled new-lights, who pretended to far greater sanctity than their neighbors, had arisen of late in divers places, especially in the town of Lee. The enthusiastic meetings of those zealots I had frequently attended from motives of curiosity, and to their manner of praying and exhorting had paid the minutest attention. As I was possessed of mimic powers, and had a tenacious memory from my cradle, I was quickly in capacity to

imitate their canting tone, and to adopt the tenor of their discourses with precision. It was even thought by some of my cronies, that, in the gift of exhortation, I far surpassed all in the town of Lee, or, indeed, elsewhere. I felt a degree of exultation at their encomiums, and having a mind to view the country, and try my skill as a preacher, I purchased me a new suit of black, a large Scotch plaid gown, and cocked up beaver, though, to tell truth, these articles squeezed my purse dry in the purchase. But I regretted nought, since I now fancied myself equipped to a T, and had moreover sanguine hopes of some lucky reimbursement. I believe my family admired at my strange conduct, and were desirous to find out what was going forward; but I kept my views the profoundest secret.

Not daring to exhibit any religious pretenses near home, I set off, directly, in the ministerial habiliments above mentioned, for the Kennebec country, where I expected to be an entire stranger.

Advancing as far as a place called *Little Falls*, in the district of Maine, I made a stop, and attended a week-day lecture. Here one Mr. Gould was the officiating minister. Every person present, judging by my clerical dress, took me for a real priest also; and after the religious exercises were nearly finished, Mr. Gould observed, that there was room for any person to speak, who might see occasion. Thinking this a convenient opening in which to display my talent at exhortation, I arose, and, with much out-

ward zeal, addressed the assembly in a speech of considerable length. When I had made an end of speaking, I resumed my chair, and the pious parson, rising in turn, averred, that I had preached as loud a sermon to his soul, as ever he had witnessed in his life, and that he verily believed I was a heaven born saint, if there were one upon the footstool. In reply to this, a young woman, by name Peggy Cotton, who was a member of the same church, rose also, and exclaimed, "He a saint? so is the devil incarnate; for my own part I have no belief in his pretended sanctity, let him profess what he will." At this abrupt declaration, the ghostly priest was much astonished, and demanded the reason of her jealousy. "If I must explain myself further, added she, permit me to say, that my opinion of this man is derived from his conduct, as it is said a tree may be known by its fruit. I took notice, on his entrance into the meeting, that he first surveyed my face, then my feet, then my whole person, in such a carnal way and manner, that I perceived he had the devil in his heart." This accusation, which I confess was literally true, disordered my muscles not a little, though I could not but admire at the intuitive sagacity of the young gypsy, who was able to hit off, so adroitly, my real character. In short, I felt myself in an awkward situation, and knew not what reply to bestow upon her accusation, when, luckily, I was relieved, in some degree, from the perplexing hobble, by the well meaning parson, who, at this instant, took part in my defense. He reprimanded,

in severe terms, my fair accuser, for harboring an idea so greatly to my disadvantage, and on no better foundation than suspicion, which is frequently fallacious. Resuming courage at this diversion in my favor, I seconded the parson in a similar strain, and expatiated on the excellency of Christian charity and forbearance. As two against one are odds at tennis, so poor Peggy, finding her ground untenable against both, prudently withdrew from the meeting, and left me master of the field as well as argument. This flurry having subsided, the people were about to depart; but the reverend priest invited my tarrying at his house all night; I accepted of the courtesy, and received the most polite treatment. The next morning, bidding my kind host adieu, I journeyed on still eastwardly; and now, taking a retrospect of the occurrences of yesterday, I thought I had succeeded tolerably well in this my first ministerial *coup d' essay*, notwithstanding the little rub I had met with from female observation. Accordingly I was bent on trying the event of a second experiment, if a suitable opportunity should occur. While such thoughts occupied my brain, I jogged on, and, as things happened, was present at another meeting the ensuing Sunday, where, at the close of service, I gave the auditory so pathetic an admonition, as drew tears from the eyes of several. In fine; exhorting and praying, either in public congregations or private families, was my daily practice during this whole tour, which as now appeared, I had spun out far beyond my original plan or intention.

Therefore, after so long a time I returned to Lee, well satisfied with my novel adventures, and the more so, since what with preaching, and what with doctoring, I had made out to fare splendidly, and to bring home a seasonable relief for domestic exigencies.

In the course of a day or two, (it being now mid-winter 1777) I went to Greenland, and spying a bee-hive, (the property of Dr. Weeks) in a tangible predicament, I made a halt while evening, and then conveyed the prize to the house of a friend, where we shared the contents between us. A few days after, being at Folsom's tavern in the same town, I was met by the Doctor, who not only charged me with stealing the hive, but threatened my commitment to prison. I found he watched my motions very critically, but, while he, with his adjutants were preparing to execute their menaces, I jumped out at a back window, fled to parson M'Clintock's garden, and there concealed myself in a cluster of bushes. The doctor, with his whole party, followed hot foot, but while they were eagerly exploring every cranny of the parson's precincts, I flipped off unnoticed, reached the great bay, crossed over on the ice, recovered safe home, and met with no further obstruction on the same score afterwards.

Subsequent to this, I ventured nocturnally to Portsmouth, in hopes of meeting with some windfall there; but discovering no prospect of that kind, I wheeled to the right about, and set off under shroud of darkness for Stratham, where I had several trusty associates. Not far

from Portsmouth I drew near a certain gentleman's seat, which I had often visited before. Here I made a halt, when feeling a sharp desire for some kind of food, as I had been fasting for many hours together, it occurred, that I knew of a horde of apples and pears not far distant. Some of those I intended to obtain; so I groped about, till, as I thought, I had found the spot where they lay; but after all met with no small resistance in breaking into the deposit. At last, however, I effected that purpose, and entered a dark subterraneous cavity. Without delay I fell to searching about, in expectation of finding, among the rubbish, something to assuage hunger; but, in a minute or two, I stumbled upon some old trumpery, that at first touch seemed to give a hollow, clattering sound. I pressed on, intending to explore the premises thoroughly, when in fumbling about I presently discovered, that I had got hold of a great coffin, which stood in one corner of the cell. The fact was, I had broken, thus heedlessly, into an old, crazy tomb, where lay interred a grandmother, and her daughter. It will be hardly possible to form an idea of my surprise, my utter astonishment, when I found myself environed with those frightful inhabitants of another world; for a few moments I was unable to move hand or foot; literally speaking "my hair stood on end, and my voice clave to my jaws." I feared to retreat, lest the old lady and her daughter should muster arms to obstruct my exit. At last, however, I recovered motion, and with a bound, evacuated the horrid domains, leaving those

tenants of the tomb to enjoy henceforth their repose unmolested. With tremulous steps I reclaimed the highway, and without veering to the right or left, passed on, till I found a welcome asylum in the bosom of my own family.

During my present continuance about home, I perpetrated a variety of thefts of minor consequence; but being desirous of brighter achievements, I digested the scheme of journeying westwardly, in like manner as I had lately traveled east. Leaving Lee, in pursuance of this arrangement, I passed from place to place, appearing sometimes in the character of a physician, and sometimes of priest, as best suited my purposes; which practice I continued till I had strolled to Norwalk in Connecticut.

The science of deception, as my readers must suppose, had been ever my favorite study, and, among other acquirements, I had learned to disguise a horse so artificially, by various methods, most frequently by the help of different paints, that the owner, to have known his property again, must have had uncommon sagacity. A trick of this kind I put in practice on the present occasion; for happening to meet, one evening, with a valuable horse belonging to one Johnson, I did not lose the propitious moment, but seized the prize, and rode him to a secluded place, where I so altered him, by painting his face white, spotting his feet and legs, and clipping his mane and tail, that he had altogether another appearance.

The next day I was overtaken on the road by Johnson himself, who, on missing the horse, had set out in quest

of him and the thieves. He surveyed the nag repeatedly, but never recognized his property. We traveled in company several miles, and then parted without his entertaining the smallest suspicion of the deceit. The horse I kept but a day or two longer, for not daring to appear with him at Lee, I sold him for the money, and with it repaired thither. . . .

[Tufts now relates the stories of two false arrests which he suffered at this time. One was for desertion from the army; the other for stealing a barrel of pork from Ichabod Hilton. In each case his innocence was established.]

No sooner did I escape from Hilton's clutches, than I made a cruise to the Isle of Shoals, distant from Portsmouth about nine miles; my purposes being twofold, the one, to catch a few fish, the other, to traffic a small matter with the inhabitants of those sterile rocks. Our crew, four in number, met with ample success, as well in the business of fishery, as in our other undertakings; but, on return homeward, it was our mishap to be suddenly overtaken by a cruel and distressing storm. It would be in vain to attempt a description of its fury, or of the fears and sufferings of our little company. Suffice it to say, that, at last, after every fatiguing exertion, we made shift to recover land, but were more dead than alive in consequence of the disastrous voyage. As this had been the first, I resolved it should be the last time, of my trusting to so treacherous an element as the ocean, unless driven thereto

by imperious necessity; although I well knew that he who was born to be *hanged* would never be drowned.

At this epoch, one Ephraim Clough, of Lee, made me a proposal to carry on his farm at Canterbury, on terms so advantageous, that I hesitated not to close with his offer, and to remove my family thither with all convenient brevity. My new place of abode bidding fair to be productive of many advantages, I applied to business with much assiduity, and among other pursuits, drove a pretty brisk traffic in buying and selling horses and neat cattle. One day I set out on a speculating tour, and journeyed on as far as New Concord. Here I met with one Eastman, who took a fancy to my horse, which indeed was an excellent one. After chaffering awhile, he bid me in exchange for him, an aged mare (on which he lavished many encomiums) and his note of hand for forty shillings, payable at a short day. With this proffer I closed; but, on my passage homeward, discovered, to my mortification, that my purchase was hardly worth picking up in the street, for she soon tired, and, what was worse, had been wind broken, and otherwise essentially damaged. I was much chagrined at the loss of my horse, but well knowing that recantation was out of the question, I concluded to sit down easy, and make the best of a bad bargain. A while after, upon inspection of the note, I found it had been written for forty *dollars*, instead of forty *shillings*. This had been Eastman's mistake; but I meant

to profit of the circumstance, so far, at least, as to bring him to an equitable compromise. With a view to this, I paid him a visit, acquainted him with the fact, and demanded payment, which he refused, being then quite intractable; but at length finding himself caught, he paid me twenty-five dollars for the redemption of his note, which restored harmony between us, but concluded our dealings.

In the course of six months, while residing at Canterbury, I bought and paid for fifty acres of wild land, though afterwards being offered a small farm much to my liking, I sold it, and every other article I could spare, for paper money, intending to collect a sufficient sum for the purchase of the farm in view; yet, after all, the owner and I differing a mere trifle in the price, we never made out to finish the bargain. I kept the money on hand, as many wise people have done, for some time, during which it depreciated, at such a rate, that I eventually lost the major part of my little all. But why do I complain of this, since similar indeed has been the fate and issue of my every enterprise through life?

Being now reduced to pretty great straits to make out a subsistence, and meager poverty staring me in the face, I went to Lee, and carried away, clandestinely, a notable quantity of flax, with several other articles. The owner suspecting that Tufts must be the thief, followed *post haste*, and took me prisoner. I was arraigned before justice Batchelder of Loudon, where the proof being suf-

ficient, I was driven to a compromise, which cost me in the end, a very good yoke of oxen.

I was not, however, so far discouraged by those reiterated misfortunes, as to remit any part of my exertions in the retrieval of them. On the contrary; I applied, with redoubled diligence, to my farming and healing business, alternately, just as occasion called; and fortune so far smiled upon my honest endeavors at agriculture, as to send me a plentiful crop the same year, which caused me to forget, in a manner, all former losses and inquietudes. But the present interval of seeming prosperity vanished more rapidly, than the morning dew before the solar beam, by the intervention of disaster more destructive in its consequences, than any I had lately experienced. While I was absent on a journey, my house accidentally caught fire, and was burned to the ground. In it were consumed all my household furniture, meat, corn, and indeed, every article I possessed; it being in the autumn of the year 1778 (according to my chronology) when the conflagration took place, I lost a sufficient quantity of provisions to have sufficed my family the whole year. I had earned the little I then lost by industry; yea, by the sweat of my brow. It was my all. I must have been callous and devoid of feeling, to have been insensible to so bitter a calamity! feel it I did, with anguish and despondency of mind.

The above dismal catastrophe compelled me to move back to Lee, where I undertook to manage my father's

farm for one year. But no long time elapsed, before I chanced to fix my eye upon a likely young mare, that belonged to my townsman, James Davis. This beast struck my fancy so forcibly, that I coveted the conversion of her to my own use, though decidedly, a transgression of the tenth commandment. Without loss of time, I laid a stratagem to steal and ride her away to Norwalk in Connecticut, that town being upwards of two hundred miles distant. All this I executed successfully, and there swapped her for a sightly horse, which I bestrode, and trotted toward West Point, where lay a part of the American army. My only motive in this portion of the journey, was to visit my brother Eliphalet, who was a soldier in that quarter.

On the road I met a man riding express, who, having tired his horse, was importunate to exchange him for mine, averring the urgency of doing the business in a minute, if at all. Thinking to take advantage of his necessity, I demanded as much boot, in cash, as my own horse was reasonably worth, which he, having no other resource, was obliged to tell down. Elated at so lucky a windfall, I jogged on slowly, (though in prime spirits,) till I alighted at a tavern in the town of Woodbury, where I put up for the night.

The landlord and his wife were absent from home, and the woman, who was left in charge of the house, being immoderately fond of a cherishing glass, she, with the other domestics, made so great a clatter all night, that I

took very little repose. In the morning I ordered out my horse, and called for the reckoning, which being shown by the hostess, I handed her a fifty-dollar bill. She took it, but being much intoxicated with her morning draft, as well as evening debauch, she gave me back two hundred and fifteen dollars by way of change. I asked, if she had made no mistake. She damn'd me, and said I had better call her drunk; adding, I had not received my proper due by ten dollars; but, on account of my insolence, she would pay me nothing more, till my return from the camps, nor even then, unless I asked her pardon. Hearing this, I begged forgiveness, and she, in token of reconciliation, presented me with a gill of rum; but said, for her word's sake, she must withhold the ten dollars till my homeward return. On this I left the house, and presently perceiving that my new horse was as good a nag, as legs e'er cross'd, I soon reached a place called Soldiers' Fortune, near West Point, where I saw my brother Eliphalet, with whom I tarried one night. I had brought him a pair of shirts, but he would receive only one, having an ample supply already; the other I sold to sergeant Hodgdon, and took seventeen cartridges and a quarter of a pound of powder in part pay.

Betimes in the morning I quitted the camp, with intent to return to New Hampshire, but had been gone but a few minutes ere one Dockum, who had seen me purchase the cartridges, went and informed Col. Reid, that I had been buying up the soldiers' ammunition. On this in-

formation the Colonel dispatched one sergeant Fowler, with a file of men, in pursuit of the transgressor. They overtook me at a tavern, a few miles from the army, where I had stopped to take breakfast, and instantly ordered me to return back to camp. I remonstrated; but to no purpose; wherefore, knowing opposition to be useless, I made a virtue of necessity, and complied. They carried me before Col. Reid, who sternly inquired, if I had been purchasing the soldiers' ammunition. I answered affirmatively. "Were you not apprised (demanded he) that, by law martial, such a crime is capital, and may cost the offender's life." I replied that I had no such knowledge, but he affirmed that such was the case, and thereupon called in sergeant Hodgdon, who sold me the cartridges. The sergeant's story was, that he found them, as well as the powder in question, at Morristown, where they had been dropped by the British, when they abandoned that place. The Colonel not satisfied with this account, which he supposed fabulous, caused the long roll to be beaten, and three companies of foot were paraded under arms. These solemn preparations filled me, I must confess, with terror and amazement, as I knew not in what manner they were to terminate. I expected nothing short of severe corporal punishment, if so fortunate as to escape death. Every man's cartridge box and other accoutrements were next examined; but, while this was doing I shook in my shoes, lest a deficiency should somewhere be found; however, I was at length eased of my

fears on that head, for it turned out that each soldier had his just complement both of cartridges and other ammunition. Such being the case, the companies were dismissed, but I was still retained under a strong guard, because a court martial had been called, and was then in session. What their decision would be I knew not; nevertheless my suspense was of short continuance, for, in less than half an hour, the court broke up, and order arrived for my final dismission.

Once more then I left the camp, happy at escaping this unforeseen difficulty with no greater detriment; but before leaving the neighborhood of the army I disposed of my horse, saddle and bridle, not daring to be seen with such appurtenances at or near Lee, where the people would have surmised that I obtained them fraudulently. On entering a wood five miles from the encampment, I was suddenly assailed by a French deserter, who presented his loaded musket, and demanded the surrender of my purse. I plead poverty, alleging that a trifling matter of change was all I possessed in the world. The robber grew impatient, and with horrible denunciations enjoined the immediate delivery of that little. To pacify him I promised compliance, but while I was rummaging my pockets under pretense of finding my purse, we heard the tramping of footsteps at no great distance. The highwayman wheeled about to descry the intruders, when instantly I cocked my fusee, and pointing at his breast, damn'd him, most vociferously, for a pig-tailed rascal,

swearing I would dispatch him, as an oblation to Vulcan in a twinkling, if he attempted moving so much as an eye in his head. At this rough greeting my hero was much daunted, and called out for quarter. I bade him march, with his gun clubbed, or I would blow his brains out, on the least symptom of disobedience. Those menaces had the desired effect, for fearing their literal execution, he marched off to the tune of the "rogue's march," till quite out of sight.

Proceeding onward I presently discerned a parcel of soldiers, who were coming toward me. I turned out of the way to avoid them, but, at sight of me, they presented their guns, and commanded me to halt, under penalty of immediate death. On wheeling, they drew near, and told me, they had been out several days in pursuit of deserters, but had found none. I assured them I was not one of that description; they were convinced, and gave me a dismission.

I met with no further impediments till evening, when I found myself near a tavern occupied by a young Dutch widow. Feeling a degree of lassitude, I went in, and requested accommodations for the night, which were readily granted. By and by, the mistress of the inn, who was an arrant coquette, inquired if I had a mind to sit in a likely young widow's lap, and share a bowl of punch. I answered, my reader may rest assured, affirmatively, and with much seeming gallantry, took possession of my seat. While we were romancing and drinking very lovingly,

she took out her silver snuff box, made in the fashion of a heart, and vowed she would give any man a bowl of punch, who could produce another of equal curiosity. As it happened, I then carried in my pocket an elegant silver box, which had lately stood me nine crowns in the purchase. This I presented for the jolly widow's inspection, who could not but confess, that I had beaten her at her own weapons. This whole night was devoted to festivity, but seasonably the next morning I resumed my journey on foot, and having concluded to explore the country, as far as possible, it became a matter of indifference what route I should pursue. Consequently I made a circuitous peregrination, and passed on through many towns and places, both in Connecticut and Massachusetts, meeting, as usual, many little rubs and incidents by the way. Those, however, I shall forbear relating, except in one or two instances.

From the sale of my last horse I had received a few dollars in silver, and while it lasted, met with no kind of difficulty in procuring necessaries; but no sooner did that resource fail, than I found some difference, since many people were scrupulous of taking paper money. Beside my stock of paper was quite inconsiderable, so that evils beginning to accumulate, I saw no remedy, save one, which was to show some old curmudgeon a Rowland for his Oliver. Abounding with such thoughts, I drew near a shoemaker's shop, it being already eleven o'clock at night, and withal pretty dark. As, at this juncture, I had

scarce a shoe to my foot, it appeared quite advisable to attempt a supply, I therefore, marched up to the shop window, but was somewhat alarmed, on hearing the joint and several snoring of two men within. Nevertheless I lifted up the sash, and with some trepidation, entered the room. The slumbers of the two men were as yet undisturbed, so I rummaged about, till I found a calf skin, and two pair of men's shoes, being the only articles of much importance in the whole shop. Those, however, I made sure of, and was so fortunate as to recover the main road without disturbing their nasal chorus.

Plodding onward, I digested affairs, so as to reach a certain dairy the next night, as I intended, at a late hour. This stood within two rods of a dwelling house, but with its situation I had previously been acquainted. If hunger, as says the adage, will break through stone walls, I supposed it might easily enable me to break through a milk house door. At any rate I resolved to try the experiment; I stepped up softly, and to my great joy, found the door upon latch. I went in, but it was so dismally dark, that I could distinguish no kind of object; however, I groped about, till I happened to put my hand upon the cock of a gun full bent. This gave me a terrible shock; I took her down, however, instantly. The gun had been placed there undoubtedly to pepper some intruder, and it appeared the greatest wonder in nature, that I had not crossed the line of demarkation, and thus ended my journey. If such had been the case, few people,

I suppose, would have pitied my perverse fate; but, be that as it might, it was my intention to take greater precaution for the future. Quitting, therefore, the buttery, I found a board fence, which I sat down behind, and there struck up a fire with my matchlock. Making then a sort of torchlight I re-entered the buttery, and presently found a profusion of butter, cheese, bread and cold meat; with which traveling requisites I made bold to gorge my pack. This necessary business completed, I trudged onward, and had a sufficiency of food to last me a French decade in the consumption. As the above was the last remarkable adventure, that I recollect, the present tour, I shall only further observe, that a few weeks subsequent to the milk house robbery, I arrived safe at Lee, and had the satisfaction to find my family in *statu quo*.

Here one of my neighbors desired my assistance in cutting a walnut tree, standing in a certain gentleman's inclosure. To assist him, more than any other purpose, I consented; but just as we had committed the trespass, and were splitting the sticks, we beheld the owner approaching. My companion, not choosing to be caught in tricks of this kind, leaped into a cluster of bushes, and lay close to the ground, but at this moment our visitant came up. Now as bad luck would have it, there was a wasp's nest in the very spot, which my accomplice had chosen for his sanctuary; but the inhabitants, like the Chinese, not relishing a strange guest, assailed him from stem to stern, without mercy; while he, dreading detec-

tion, was forced to lie still, and abide their goads and stings without a murmur. Meanwhile, the gentleman, as proprietor of the soil, demanded his moiety of the walnut, but to content him, I proposed cutting another tree. This met with his approbation, and the business being dispatched in a moment, he returned home; when my partner was relieved from his ticklish confinement, but as much swollen, to appearance, as a bladder with wind.

Knowing our landlord to be extremely forgetful we hazarded hauling away both the trees; and without doubt the whole vanished from his memory, since he never was heard to complain of the injury.

Meantime, James Davis, above mentioned, believing I had deprived him of his steed, made me a *domiciliary visit*, and challenged me with the theft. As usual, I denied the fact, but on his promising, most solemnly, to take no advantage, if I would only declare the truth, I at last frankly confessed, that I had ridden her to Norwalk, in Connecticut, and there sold her. I further consented to accompany him, or his son, thither, in order to reimburse him, if practicable, by stealing the beast a second time. Agreeably to this, young Davis and myself commenced the expedition, during which, I defrayed every expenditure by doctoring. As we went on foot, the journey was tedious, but mauger all impediments, we reached Norwalk in the course of a fortnight, timing matters so as to enter the town just in the edge of the evening. I conducted my partner, who was a mere novice in wickedness,

to the stable, where I supposed the mare yet in keeping. He went in, with intent to lead her forth, but finding a dozen or more steeds, tied together in the same stall, he was incapable, in the dark, of distinguishing his own from the others. So being utterly averse from taking any other horse, he returned empty handed. The night being obscure and cloudy, what measures to pursue we could not devise. He was very apprehensive, that his mare had been removed to some other quarter. In this dilemma, I offered, in turn, to make trial of my skill in obviating the difficulty, so, entering the stable, I led out a beast, and told Davis it was his own. He was incredulous, but upon my avouching her identity, we both mounted, and rode a few miles, when finding a horse, saddled and bridled, by the wayside, I stripped him of his trappings, and tried them upon ours, merely to see if they would fit; which finding to be particularly the case, I suffered them to remain, and remounting, with my associate, pushed on with much rapidity. We rode upwards of thirty miles before the appearance of the morning dawn; but no sooner did objects become visible, than Davis, much to his comfort, found himself, in fact, on the back of his own mare. Strange as it may seem, I distinguished her from the other horses in the stable, by the manner of her chewing hay.

Never hearing that any person pursued after the lost beast, we reached home without obstacle or annoyance.

Chapter III

EXETER DUNGEON

Still, adverse fortune, with increasing weight,
Augments his sorrows and decides his fate;
Evincing that our various scenes of woe
From our own vices and misconduct flow.

About this time, in pursuance of congressional orders, troops were enlisting in every quarter, for three years, or during the war; to the end, that a more regular and permanent army, than heretofore, might be established for the defense of the country.

Without adverting to consequences, I went to Salisbury, and enlisted under Capt. True for three years. This step, as will be seen, turned out greatly to my disadvantage, and became, for a long while a source of continual persecution and embarrassment. Having enlisted, I had orders to repair to Andover by a certain day, there to pass muster, and receive bounty and accoutrements, which, indeed, had been my only inducement to the transaction. At time and place I appeared, and was furnished with some money and other articles, but not with the quantity stipulated. In a short time we were marched to Castle Island, in the harbor of Boston, there to remain, till ordered to join the regiment, under Col. Crane, at West Point. Our

continuance at the Castle was four weeks, when directions arrived from headquarters for our proceeding to the place last mentioned. We were three hundred in number, and were marched first to Roxbury, where we drew one week's provision, and then advanced seven miles further to Watertown. Here, evening approaching, every man was obliged, of necessity, to look out for his own lodging and accommodations. While others were engaged in this business, I was quite differently employed; for growing sick, at the thoughts of a three years' campaign, and having now a convenient opportunity for desertion, I made use of the privilege, and returned by unfrequented paths to my own dwelling.

Immediately, however, I found myself in a more critical situation than heretofore, since many stratagems were now devised for my speedy apprehension, insomuch that I dared not show my head abroad for fear of apprehension.

By clandestine methods, then, I was constrained to procure the means of support, shooling* poultry, sheep, and such other conveniences, as chance threw in my path. In this occupation, by so long experience, I had acquired a masterly adroitness, so that now I should have yielded the palm to none of my competitors. However, being in continual danger of seizure, either for theft or desertion, I passed every moment in abject fear and perplexity. My farming business was wholly interrupted, and I dared not

* Shooling,—i.e., begging or sponging.—*E.P.*

venture to hire out. To steal or starve, then, was the question; I wisely preferred the former, and drove a brisk stroke at the dangerous pursuit. . . . [Tufts house is besieged by his enemies, bent on arresting him as a deserter. He hides in the woods for a fortnight, but is finally caught and sent to Exeter jail. With an auger and two saws, given him by a friend, he bores through the wall. His escape is almost frustrated by "two or three female hoity toities" who come in at a critical moment to consult him as a soothsayer. He shocks them with unseemly language and drives them forth. He then crawls through the hole he has made. A fat prisoner named Whiting tries to follow but sticks fast. Tufts returns to his father's home.]

The next day I met with James Smith, that worthy knight of the post aforementioned, in whose company I went to Berwick, where by the use of false keys, we opened Moses Purington's fulling mill, taking thence about fifty yards of fulled cloth. We conveyed the whole to Newmarket, and sold the greater part of it at half price, to people in creditable circumstances. Some of the purchasers, however, though duly apprised how and where we had procured the effects, were so improvident, as to leak out the whole affair, consequently Smith and I were forced to indemnify the injured owner.

On discovery of the foregoing scandalous exploit, my adversaries bestirred themselves so briskly, that I was again arrested, hurried to Exeter jail, and secured closely

in an upper back room. The day after, a man looking in, advised me to beware how I meddled with the timbers fronting the entry, as the same were loose and unfastened. I assured him I should be careful to attempt no such thing. He then importuned me for the loan of a few dollars, but I handed him only a couple, which he gratefully received. Perhaps, if Capt. Ladd, or some others, equally sharp, had overheard this discourse, immediate measures had been taken to prevent all possibility of escape; but, luckily, everything abode in statu quo till evening, when I made out to remove several pieces of the aforesaid timber, and thus found myself once more in the broad entry. I made bold to march down the front stairs, and when passing out of doors, heard the jailor and his family conversing unconcernedly over a cup of tea.

Gaining the open street, I made the best of my passage to Lee; but fearing to abide long there, went to Nottingham, and betook myself to the woods. As I was now extremely apprehensive of being diligently pursued, I never adventured into any house, but encamped in the forests and subsisted upon dunghill fowls, vegetables and such other fare, as my nightly depredations afforded. In this manner, two or three weeks elapsed, when growing weary of such a miserable existence, I returned to Lee, and took shelter in my father's barn.

Disrelishing, however, even this mode of life, I came to the hasty conclusion of stealing the Longfellow mare, the property of Ephraim Clough. I had entertained an

opinion for some time, that this chap had jockeyed me out of a suit of clothes, and a barrel of rum, which articles I could never prevail with him to refund. On those accounts, I owed him an old grudge, and having no other way to be even with him, determined on making reprisals in the manner above mentioned. Whereupon, one night, I repaired to his pasture, and finding the object of my search, rode her to Gilmanton, and thence to Meredith; in which last place, though distant but forty miles from Lee, I had the effrontery to ride about doctoring. I had continued in this employment but a few days, before Clough gained some intimation of my route, and dispatched Capt. Joseph Thomas in quest of his mare, with directions to seize and convey me to Lee, at all events. Thomas procured the assistance of a Robert Bryant. They found me at the house of one Marston, (a blacksmith) who had been just shoeing my horse. Thomas approached with a muffler over his visage, so that I suspected him not, till he had made me his captive. As the men, in whose custody I now was, were both strong and active, I had little prospect, or indeed, hopes, of eluding their vigilance; so judged it most prudent to submit quietly to the indignity of being manacled; which office they exultingly executed, and then started with their prisoner for Lee.

Riding a few miles we called in at Ray's tavern in Gilmanton, where I treated my keepers so profusely with spirits, that both became excessively mellow. The wait-

ing maid observing their tippling propensity, advised my *treating* them freely; in which case she would warrant me out of their clutches before morning. I thought her advice apropos, and plied my conductors so warmly, that, before leaving the house, they both grew *reeling ripe*, and were scarce able to remount their horses. Bryant, soon losing his equilibrium was incapable of further progress; we dropped him on the road, and rode on to Gilman's tavern, in the town last mentioned. Here Thomas and I alighted just after sunsetting, and concluded to refresh ourselves and horses before renewing the journey. I called for more liquor, when my Argus, making free with the cup as before, was soon in as bad a pickle, to a trifle, as his colleague, Bryant.

At this stage of the business, Thomas insisted upon remounting our horses, while I urged the necessity of tarrying all night, promising to be ready, as early in the morning, as he might wish. My remonstrances were ineffectual, but as I had no notion of traveling in the dark, I was bent on studying some scheme of prevention. So stepping to the door, under pretense of getting the horses in readiness, I fell purposely to the ground, roaring out at the same time, most bitterly, that I had dislocated my collar bone. This pretended disaster set aside all thoughts of removal, at least for the present; the company thought me exceedingly ill, and sent for a neighboring doctor, who pronounced my case extremely difficult. He assured the people, in a tone as wise as Cullen, that my removal any

where, in less time than a fortnight, would be altogether impracticable. I was well pleased that my device had taken such complete effect; in which the dictator, Thomas, was constrained to acquiesce, though, by this time the liquor, which he had gorged, in such profuse quantities, began to operate so forcibly, that he was obliged to prostrate himself on the floor, before the kitchen fire, in order (as he said) to take a nap. He soon fell into the profoundest slumbers, out of which he did not experience a resuscitation, (as I afterwards learned) till late the next morning. I also took a temporary lodging; but in the dead of night, (all being asleep) stole softly out of the house, and sped away with the Longfellow mare, leaving Thomas to discharge my reckoning in addition to his own. The next day, Thomas, having neither prisoner nor money, with which to clear out, was obliged to leave in pawn, his saddle, and ride home without that conveniency.

I made the best of my way to Canterbury, and there stayed about a week, when news arrived, that I was a deserter from the army, and had moreover stolen Clough's mare. This report excited no small stir among the inhabitants; but, by means of a friendly hint, I discovered the danger just in season for elopement. Thus I left Canterbury; but not daring to keep the road, was forced to abandon the mare, which was taken up, and sent home to the owner.

Soon after this, my evil genius, Clough, was so pertina-

cious in his researches, that he succeeded in taking me with a warrant; and, as preferable to imprisonment, I compounded with my adversary, by paying, and securing to him the payment of one hundred dollars. At the instant of release, I set off for my father's dwelling; but my bad luck was so predominant at this juncture, that, before reaching the intended asylum, I was again captured, and hurried away to Exeter jail.

Chapter IV

NOR IRON BARS A CAGE

Labor omnia vicit
Improbus, et duris urgens in rebus egestas.
VIRGIL.

IN requital of my former vicious tricks and imprudent behavior, I was now guarded with more suspicious vigilance, and treated with greater severity than usual. Moreover, from the aspect of affairs, it seemed to strike my imagination, that some greater mischief was yet in embryo. My suspicions were far from being visionary, for a day or two after my imprisonment, the compassionate Simeon Ladd, Esq., who had still the charge of the prison, made me an unwelcome visit and imparted a piece of intelligence in its nature the most ungrateful. He affirmed, that my removal into the dungeon was now in contemplation, where I was destined to be chained in irons. I expostulated against the cruelty and barbarity of such a procedure; yet he, as he was, indeed, callous to the feelings of humanity, left me, without consolation, and repairing to Daniel Jones, a blacksmith, in Exeter, bespoke a set of massy irons or shackles, weighing, with their appendages, twenty-five pounds. Jones, having prepared those trappings of cruelty, brought them in person,

and having removed me to the dungeon, fixed a strong shackle round each of my ankles. Presently after, a large bolt, about two feet in length, was introduced red hot; the taper ends of which were twisted about either shackle, thus distending my feet to an uncomfortable distance asunder. To cool the bolt they poured on water, which, trickling down, boiling hot, scalded my feet and ankles so miserably, that I remained a cripple for three months after. While this process was on the anvil, those tiger hearted animals ridiculed my sufferings, and without regard to my tears and outcries, continued the effusion of water, till the bolt was sufficiently cooled. This tragedy ended, all was made fast with a chain, two feet in length, one end of which communicated with the bolt, the other being inserted into a staple, that was now driven through the flooring.

In such wretched state, incapable as I was, of stepping one foot before the other upon the floor, I was abandoned to my own reflections. My situation was now deplorable indeed; I was entirely destitute of wholesome food and lodging, and pent up in a loathsome dungeon, the windows whereof were kept for the most part closed. The mouth of the vault was open, hard by, but which for the brevity of the chain, I could scarcely reach; while the nauseous and disagreeable damps and stenches, that evaporated incessantly from the filth deposited therein, impregnated the cell with the most odious effluvia, and rendered my condition horrid in the extreme. Hence my

health and strength visibly declined, and with them my intellectual faculties. Having no means of healing my scalded feet and ankles, the pains I endured at intervals were in a manner intolerable; while too, the benevolent *janitor* refused to supply me with the smallest medicinal assistance. The above were a few of the multiplex evils, which conspired to depress my spirits, waste my corporeal powers, and sink me into despair.

In the shocking circumstances above described, I continued for upwards of three months, without aid or assistance from either friend or foe, or so much as the expectation of relief! It seemed indeed, as if there had been no hand to help, no eye to pity me! Fain would I believe that very few were acquainted with the real state of my sufferings at that period; sufferings, of which I could foresee neither diminution nor end! !

Becoming daily more and more debilitated, I was at length convinced, that I must shortly fall a victim to this barbarous treatment, unless some speedy method of extrication could be contrived. Accordingly rendered outrageous by despair, I at last undertook the tedious and operose task of breaking jail, destitute as I was, of all needful implements; a task and labor it proved indeed.

To free myself from the chain, by which I was held to the floor, was apparently the first thing necessary; for unless this were severed, I could move in no direction to any manner of purpose. Instruments I had none. However, one day, when served with my pittance of food, I

contrived to keep back an old case knife, which I notched against my irons and so converted it into a kind of saw. With this miserable instrument I made shift to file off a link of the chain, in so artificial a manner as to be able to close the fracture whenever I had occasion. I could now move conveniently to any part of the cell; but my strength wasting apace, it was certain that unless expeditious, I should reap no possible benefit from my operations.

My first step was to examine and pry into every portion of the apartment, if happily I might find any one part of slighter structure than the rest, or more obnoxious to attack. The whole however appeared firm and impervious, only I imagined that the timber composing the vault or drain to be of somewhat less stability, than the residue. Against this quarter, therefore I finally determined to direct my whole battery; but after the most critical research and multiplied exertions, I found it impossible to make the slightest impression, unless by sawing off the tenon of a joist four inches in thickness. This, obviously, was a task Herculean, yet I set about it with much bravery; and, by the help of my knife, at last accomplished the undertaking, though it cost me three days and nights of painful toil. Whenever I expected a visit from those who brought my daily allowance, it was my care and practice to reinstate myself in chains; yet mauger this precaution, it was a miracle that I escaped detection.

I had now rendered practicable my descent into the

vault, yet still found to my grief, that all further progress was impeded, by the intervention of new obstacles. The fact was, every side of the subterraneous cavity was surrounded with impenetrable timbers, so strong that my utmost prowess was inadequate to the removal of a single piece, without the aid of more forcible implements. To remedy this, I resolved, if possible, to cut out the iron bar, or mantel piece, from the chimney, which was a difficult piece of business; yet I effected it, by scraping away the lime or mortar that cemented it to the bricks. With fresh animation, then, I fell to work, and by the help of this able instrument, so loosened the opposing timbers, that I removed them out of the passage effectually. Fearing, however, lest some inauspicious event might yet mar all, and prevent my escape, I went back, and with much sang froid, replaced the mantel piece in its original situation.

During the whole of this elaborate process, I had remained free from suspicion, though visited by sundry people, particularly the sagacious Mr. Ladd; that lynx-eyed gentleman, though constantly upon the lookout, never discovered the least part of my design; nor do I believe, had an opening been made in the floor, that Ladd would have noticed it, unless, unfortunately, he had fallen therein.

Being now ready for departure, and anxious to leave the domains of this horrid cavern, I descended, for the last time, into the vault, and to my great satisfaction, made out to creep, on all four, into the jail yard, leaving the

broken timbers supported with a prop in token of derision.

It was already past the hour of twelve at night, and some place of refuge must be sought out, before the light of the morning should betray my proceedings. Therefore, from the environs of the prison, I instantly commenced a singular mode of procession; loaded, as I was, with the ponderous iron trappings, which, by reason of the bolt, distended my legs to just such a distance asunder. Encumbered in this guise, I could advance but tardily, my feet describing the portion of a circle at every step I advanced. The clattering sounds, emitted from the chains, disturbed the general silence of the night, and awakened, in my palpitating bosom, ideas of horror and amazement; lest, unfortunately, I should be obstructed in my retreat at last, and reconveyed to that habitation of darkness, which I had, thus recently, abandoned; to that mansion of woe, which already had made such fearful ravages upon my constitution, and might well, ere now, have become my tomb.

Amid such reflections I continued the complex, orbicular kind of movement I was forced to adopt, till I had gotten clear of the compact part of Exeter, when I halted to listen; but the din of pursuers was as yet unheard, all seemed hushed, and still, as the house of death; only the noise of a distant cascade, trilled through the air in broken murmurs, and stole softly upon the listening ear. My agitations began to subside, and fatigued as I was, I marched,

or rather hobbled slowly along, till I found myself in a small woody valley, situated a mile east of the jail.

In this sequestered spot I reclined upon the earth, exhausted with excessive toil, and lengthy abstinence. It was certain I could proceed no further, for the present; I therefore made use of the little strength yet in my possession, to lop down some tall brakes, for the purpose of precluding the raw piercing air, and of screening my retirement from the sight of pursuers; or at present, of eluding the inspection of those who might pass that way, ere my final retreat should be secured.

In this comfortless place, I endeavored to compose my agitated spirit; but the chilly damps of night (it being fall of the year) effectually baffled all repose, and caused the solitary hours to linger in their passage.

Soon as ruddy Aurora had dispelled the nocturnal shades, and emblazoned, with new born light, the east, I could hear the busy race of mortals, with freshest activity, renewing their temporal employments, while I seemed banished, as it were, from society, a mere excrescence; an outcast from among men.

Bright Sol had scarcely gilded the lofty spires, in plain words, the steeple of the meeting house at Exeter, when I received a serious alarm, by a distant cry, which I supposed must have proceeded from those who were searching for the poor fugitive Tufts. I listened till the murmurs began to approximate, when I found I was not deceived in my conjectures. Unable to flee, I lay close to

the ground, and presently discerned about sixty persons, old and young, with Capt. Ladd, like Falstaff with his ragged corps, at their head, marching in a direction toward the river, and exploring with hound-like sagacity, every hole and corner, as they proceeded. I trembled in every limb, expecting to be unavoidably detected, for they appeared determinedly, to bend their course towards my place of refuge. However, fortunately for poor Henry, they passed by, at a small distance, and pursued a track leading to the river side, where espying no traces of my flight, they concluded I had broken the shackles, and, perhaps by swimming over the river, had effected my escape. This induced them to turn homeward, but on their way back, Philip Johnson, one of the troop, chanced to approach so near to the place of my concealment, that, on turning his head, he espied my person, and drawing nearer, stared full in my face. Then it was, I gave myself up entirely for lost; Johnson, however, sounded no alarm as yet, but going toward Ladd cried out, "What's to be the premium for finding Tufts?" Ladd, with his usual ingenuity, replied "Nothing." "Then (says Johnson) I'll hunt for him no longer." "Nor will I," echoed Ladd; saying which, he steered homeward, with the whole *posse commitatus* at his heels.

No sooner were they out of hearing, than, for fear of another visit, I shifted my quarters, crippling along, till I reached a sequestered spot, at some distance. Here I

made a halt, but so exhausted with alimentary privations and my uncouth method of traveling, that I vowed to budge never an inch farther, till divested of my dangling accoutrements. Nevertheless as the bustle was now laid, and a ray of hope had moderated my anxiety, I thought first to lie down, and obtain, if possible, a little repose. In this I succeeded so far as to fall into a drowse; but sleep was of short continuance, the smallest sound vibrating on the ear, or the shaking of even a leaf, being amply sufficient to disturb my uneasy slumbers. Finding it chimerical to hope for refreshment from sleep, in my present circumstances, I quitted the mossy couch, and, having a pair of old scissors, bequeathed me a few days since by a friend, I twisted them in twain, and by notching the two pieces against each other, converted them into a couple of saws.

With these poor utensils, I commenced dividing the center of the bolt; and in the course of two or three hours, by repeating the flying touches with the utmost agility, made a visible indentation. This so weakened the bolt, that upon my placing the extremities upon two stones, and smiting it with a third, it parted asunder, and eased me of my irksome manacles without further resistance.

Being now exonerated, I hastily tied the iron fragments together, slung them to my back, and trudged away to a place of more safety, where I rested under covert for the residue of the day.

No sooner had the evening shades advanced, than I

left my hiding place, and went to the river which separates Stratham from Newmarket. Here the first thing I earnestly undertook, was to wash away some of the filth, contracted by so lengthy a familiarity with Exeter vault. This done, I constructed a kind of raft with pine boards, of which I bereft a neighboring fence, on which I crossed the tide into Newmarket, so that late at night, I reached home, being, of a truth, almost famished for lack of sustenance.

The next day I sold my brother the disgraceful shackles, I had transported hither, which being converted into a pair of clevices, so termed, were esteemed the most durable and valuable utensils of the kind, in the town of Lee.

This last absence from home had been of so long duration, that my wife and family had suffered immoderately; and, on my arrival, were destitute of many of the comforts of life; wherefore I resorted, almost necessarily, to the old trade of pilfering; which, at this time, afforded us a temporary supply. . . .

Chapter V

TUFTS TURNS SOUTH

Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori.
VIRGIL.

. . . AT this period I digested a scheme, which had long been a favorite subject of contemplation; viz. that of visiting some of the southerly states. The real inducements, for achieving a journey of such prolixity, were, in the first place, curiosity; and in the second, a desire of liberating myself from the persecution of industrious enemies, who ill brooked my abode at Lee, in any degree of tranquillity. I, therefore, quitted home, a pedestrian, but, as we all aim at advancement, soon furnished myself with an excellent horse. Passing through Wilmington, I stole, in the daytime, for myself and a number of soldiers, a beehive, from the end of a farmer's house; the owner being nearly within reach at the very moment. The prize I conveyed to a stone bridge, distant about one furlong, where we devoured as much of the honey as we could well gorge down, sweeter on account of the stealth, and then flung the residue, hive and all, into the river remembering the injunction, "cast your bread upon the waters."

From Wilmington, I patrolled the country as far as

Virginia, having daily recourse to customary artifices for a subsistence. I afterwards traversed a great part of that gigantic state, the land of presidents; but, because Virginia, however, colossal, was ill suited to my particular exigencies, I rode back to New York; where, one day, as I was jogging deliberately along the highway, I met a young woman of German extraction, with whom I entered into familiar converse. After some minutes whiled in this manner, I happened to inquire whither she might be traveling, and was told, that she was in pursuit of a husband. I observed, that she and I, then, might shake hands with propriety, for I also was in quest of a wife. Upon this, with a smile, she gave me an invitation to attend her home, to which, as may well be supposed, I assented most cheerfully.

On our arrival, she introduced me into her father's presence, who was an elderly widower, and very rich. The old gentleman, after a multiplicity of queries, told me he had a parcel of idle negroes, but was in want of a good overseer to keep them diligently at work. His fair daughter, seizing this opportunity, ventured to recommend me to her sire, as the fittest person he would meet with to discharge that office. Pleased at the intelligence, the old man bade me very handsome wages, provided I would consent to tarry in the family. This was precisely what I desired; and if I exhibited the smallest reluctance in acceding to the flattering proposal, my conduct, certainly, did not correspond with my inclination; though,

to tell truth, the personal charms of the young lady, rather than the old don's money, were my principal temptations in courting an alliance with the family.

The day following, I was invested with the superintendence of the negroes; an undertaking to me quite novel, and which presently became irksome; since the tardiness of the drones committed to my oversight, and their disinclination to labor, but ill accorded with the impatience of my temper.

However, my commission was executed in general, much to the satisfaction of my employer, who could not but observe with what rapidity his business progressed under my strenuous management.

The young lady, on whose account solely I lingered in her father's employ, was remarkably handsome; of easy access, and of a winning deportment; these fascinating qualities impelled me to pay her my devoirs with assiduity, which, at length, gained her affections so entirely, that her fortune, I make no question, as well as person, might have remained at my disposal. Meantime I fared like a prince; for my enamorata supplied me abundantly with every gratification that imagination could suggest or heart desire. It seemed as if I had found, at last the horn of plenty, and that the cup of pleasure and prosperity was fondly presented to my lips. Yet it was not in the allotment of fate, that my felicity should be of long continuance; for anon it will be seen, that both horn and

cup vanished as a phantasma, or the fleeting image of a nightly dream, leaving nought but regret behind.

I now learned that my mistress was a young widow, who had been married to a young gentleman of some repute; but that her partner had died, (herself childless) within two years of their union. She now appeared desirous of a new husband; wherefore, as our intimacy increased, she showed the fondest desire that I should carry my end of the marriage yoke, and settle in that part of the country; but, as if controlled by some invisible power, I declined the (perhaps advantageous) proffer, and frankly acknowledged myself within the matrimonial pale already. This objection, she considered as trivial, and sought to allure me by holding up to view the prospect of future riches and happiness; averring that she was an only child, and sole heiress to her father's plentiful estate, who, she said, was too far advanced in years, to encourage the hope of his much longer survival. But, after all, her persuasions were ineffectual, since I had determined to quit the precincts, and that at no distant period.

Her aged sire being afflicted with a complication of infirmities, I acquainted him, that the practice of physic had been sometimes my favorite employment; making him a tender of my services, for that purpose. The information was agreeable, having long submitted to the care of the faculty, in vain; he therefore employed me as a family physician, during my after residence at his house.

About two months after my first acquaintance with

this family, I met with an unwelcome surprise, owing to one Lieut. Mooney's sudden arrival at the house. He was a waggoner to the army, and had known me from infancy, egg and bird. I was in momentary expectation of his divulging something to my disadvantage, but as he did not, my fears on that score were unnecessary. Before his leaving the place, I had a private conference with him, and obtained his firm promise of inviolable secrecy, as to my situation and character. After the above incident, I tarried with my dulcinea a month longer, during which my felicity seemed incapable of further augmentation; but at the end of these delicious days, I acquainted her, that the critical posture of my affairs demanded a speedy return to New Hamphshire. At this news, being infinitely averse to my departure, she was much affected; but I assured her the urgency was absolute; so I settled with her sire, and received the arrear of wages yet my due; which done, I took an affectionate, though reluctant farewell of the young lady, who, in all things, had proved my kind benefactress, as well as indulgent mistress. At parting she presented me with a handful of dollars, besides many other tokens of her affection, all which, save the money, I preserved for some time subsequent. . . .

Tarrying but a few days at home, I set out on a pedestrian expedition to Vermont. But previous to departure, I had picked up, by chance, the small claw of a lobster, which I informed the people, as I passed along, was an enchanted horn; by virtue of which I could predict future

events; but that, unfortunately, I had lost another horn, its counterpart, to which had been attached the rare property of enabling its possessor to *foretell* past events. This ridiculous tale was accredited by many; I therefore, gained much celebrity, as a conjuror; sometimes my fees amounting to eight shillings in an evening. In this journey I passed through a considerable portion of Vermont, going thence, in a circuitous route, through the Pigwacket country, and then directly home. . . .

Afterwards I strolled from pillar to post; but was in perpetual fear of being apprehended and carried to the army, in the dangerous quality of a deserter. At this period, a gentleman offered me a suit of blazing red clothes, at a very cheap rate; they being, indeed, a little the worse for wear. In want of apparel, I inconsiderately closed the bargain, but soon found, as "red coat," carried terror in the sound, that the singularity of my dress excited great notice, wherever I ventured to appear. Still sheer necessity compelled my wearing the inauspicious suit, because I had, at that time, no change of raiment, save an old frock and trousers.

At length visiting Plastow, I was again recognized, and one Johnson, a military officer, undertook my apprehension. By this man, I was industriously tracked from house to house, and from place to place, and, more than once, had like to have been made the dupe of his artifices. To elude observation, I stripped off the red coat and tied it up in a bundle, wearing the frock and trousers over my

other apparel. By this expedient I escaped much notice; yet was obliged to travel, principally, under the shroud of darkness, and to lodge in the woods and barns. But in spite of this precaution my active pursuer had like to have caught me at last; for hearing that I much frequented a certain obscure swamp in Plastow, he was induced to explore it thoroughly. I lay concealed near its border, without knowledge of the search, till Johnson, with his adjutant, had drawn so near, as to render secret flight altogether impracticable. Before they espied me, I took out a jacknife, and fell to cutting withes, as if to repair an old fence near the environs of the wood. My pursuers saw me at work, and drew near; but as I was dressed in the frock and trousers, and personally unknown to both, they had no suspicion of my being the delinquent. We conversed together, for some time, and talked much concerning Tufts, whom they pronounced a bad man, and a fellow whom they alloted to capture, at all events. After this they marched off; and I instantly, also, quitted Plastow, making no halt, except to refresh my body with food, and my weary limbs with occasional repose, till I reached my own castle.

But in Lee I found my exchange of quarters had been from bad to worse, for I was now more sedulously persecuted than ever, insomuch, that I was forced to take refuge, at last, in my brother, Thomas Tufts' house.

At this era of the revolution, there existed the greatest exigency for men to recruit the army, which was the main

reason, I presume, of my being hunted with such obstinate pertinacity.

I had enjoyed my brother's hospitality but a short period, ere the people of Lee discovered the sanctuary I had chosen, and came, twenty or more, to arrest the obnoxious culprit. My brother espying them, directed me to flee to the woods with all speed, as the only possible means of eluding their vigilance. The band was formidable, being armed with every kind of weapon, and already within pistol shot; so that I was glad to flee with the utmost precipitancy. Luckily, I made out to escape through a back window; to reach unseen, the neighboring woods, and to conceal myself in the obscurity of a thicket.

After they had sufficiently ransacked the house, from top to bottom, to no purpose, they made toward the skirts of the wood, and two of the company, Tuttle and Frost, happened to steer directly to the place of my concealment. The rest of the party had taken a different circuit, and were removed from them, at least a quarter of a mile. Soon as I found myself discovered, I hastily arose, and pulling out a brace of pistols, which I was rarely without, cocked both, and told Tuttle and Frost, I would shoot the first man who attempted to stir, or give the least alarm. As they both were destitute of guns, and sadly intimidated at the outrageous menaces I uttered, they thought it most prudent to comply with my injunctions. Detaining my guests, till the rest of the scout were a good distance ahead,

I permitted their departure; but no sooner were they out of sight, than I made the best of my way to another coppice, near Packer's falls, in the recesses of which I carefully concealed myself till evening.

Sequestered in this woody labyrinth, from all human intercourse, I had leisure to brood over former calamities, and the infelicity of my present situation. Whithersoever I turned my eyes, to the right hand or the left, I still beheld industrious adversaries ready to seize and deliver me into the hands of inexorable justice. I was conscious, that my person and flagrant misdemeanors were known and reprobated so generally, as to preclude the hope of my abiding in safety, near the place of my nativity. Even a reformation of life and manners could have little tendency, I supposed, after such a series of enormities, to reestablish my credit or reputation. All thoughts, therefore, of present amendment I cast away as useless, and as a task too unpromising, too arduous even to attempt, much less accomplish. Upon the whole, I felt a *disinclination* for every laudable pursuit, and a *disposition* to travel on in my former dissolute courses; for, really, my sufferings, though severe, had not cured my vicious propensities, nor had the school of adversity, though bitter, taught me the salutary doctrine of repentance.

Thus did I pass the hours, till the shades of night enveloped the face of things, and invested my person with a sort of invisibility. Whither, after all, to shape my course, I wist not; for horror and despondency had engrossed my

imagination, and operated, as a deadly weight, to clog the wheels of useful enterprise; yea, to plunge me more deeply, more irreversibly, into the abyss of depravity and woe.

To abide longer in this wretched spot, without sustenance I found physically impossible. Already the calls of nature had become querulous, and pointed out the necessity of instant removal; I therefore left the thickets, and repaired to the house of a friend, where having quieted the cravings of appetite, I commenced a solitary journey toward the east. . . .

After strolling afield a while longer, I even hazarded an approximation to Lee; and, when within about twenty miles of that town, accidentally fell in with a daughter of Love, whom I found propitious to my warmest wishes. The first three weeks I was rarely absent, night or day from her bewitching company, proving to my satisfaction in that interim, (if the thing needed proof) that,

> "In soft battles I could pass the night,
> And rise next morning, vig'rous for the fight,
> Fresh as the day, and active as the light."

I had serious thoughts of pulling the matrimonial noose, with this young Doxy, to which she appeared most amorously inclined; but, at last, I formed an opinion, natural to every capacity, that, to enter Hymen's soft domains, within so short a distance of Lee, would be a procedure too perilous for experiment.

While engaged in this amour I casually contracted some little acquaintance with one Ebenezer Hubbard, a straggling adventurer, whom I perceived to be a bird of my own feather. Our meeting accelerated the dereliction of my new mistress; whose personal charms had otherwise, commanded the devoirs of her humble servant a longer period.

Hubbard and I agreed to commence a career of larceny, in concert and to share the profits jointly. Our first essay commenced at Durham, where we eased George Frost of the trouble of a horse; and, when passing through a part of Vermont, disposed of him to one Daniel Eldridge, of Pownald. Frost, gathering some information of this circumstance, went to Vermont, and persuaded Eldridge to surrender the property. However I was detained by the latter to respond damages, and rather than controvert the affair, I engaged to pay thirty dollars and a yoke of oxen, as the mean of avoiding worse consequences.

Hubbard being unable to make remittances, and both being considered as holden by the law of *firms* and copartnership, the burden fell principally upon my shoulders, reducing me thereby to a pitiful strait; I was enabled, however, in the end, by one means or another, to clear the incumbrance, and thus obtained a dismission.

Hubbard and I then resorted to Lee, where, on account of the late unlucky disaster, we were reduced to the very lowest ebb. I was in favor of dissolving partnership, but Hubbard opposed the idea. For whatever reasons he was

averse from quitting my company, so I gave up the point, and set out with my auxiliary for the purpose of breaking open and robbing, in the neighborhood, a fulling-mill. This we accomplished, and acquired by the means a quantity of milled cloth, which we conveyed to Lee, and secreted in my father's field.

The losers naturally mistrusted *Hubbard & Tufts*, and on instant search made, succeeded in securing us both. We were separated forthwith, when Hubbard, being threatened by some, and coaxed by others, had the simplicity to confess every fact, and to reveal where the cloth lay concealed. The owners, meeting with such brilliant success, both in finding their property, and in detecting the aggressors, conducted us triumphantly before a justice of the peace, who awarded our commitment to Exeter jail. The court happened to be then in session, we were tried out of hand, and sentenced to receive twenty lashes apiece, which order was executed, without mercy. The residue of our punishment was to lie in durance twenty days, and then to be sold for damages and in the event of non-payment, cost.

The penalty of imprisonment, we satisfied in its fullest extent; for, as no man in his senses would purchase such kind of trumpery, as were a brace of condemned malefactors; our dismission was the consequence.

Luckily for my health, none of the officers of the Bay State, as Massachusetts was then called, (for there had been my three years' enlistment) nor any of their obse-

quious tools, happened to come along during my confinement. I say, luckily, since had their old master, the devil, sent any of them to Exeter, at this crisis, it is more than probable, that, in lieu of a dismission, I had been taken into custody, and forwarded to the army. It was not long, however, before I met with fresh disturbance on the score of desertion, in consequence of which I was obliged to leave house and home, and betake myself to precipitate flight.

The first place I halted at, for any length of time, was Canterbury; this being a country town, I felt here a reasonable degree of confidence.

One day, being at work with a farmer in his field, I showed him a method, recently invented, by myself, of playing upon three pompion* vines at a time, so as to make a kind of melody, not indeed music, though consisting of such a variety of strange, harmonious jargonic sounds, in combination, as might, at a distance, be thought to resemble harmony; the larger vine carrying a sort of bass, and the smaller ones, tenor and treble. Those sounds, in a still night, may be heard, very distinctly, at the distance of a mile or more.

As it happened, the night ensuing was pretty dark, so the man, to whom was imparted the above secret, and myself, out of sheer mischief, agreed to travel the rounds, in order to astonish the inhabitants, by blowing upon the vines. To this end we furnished ourselves with a suit-

* Pumpkin—*E.P.*

able apparatus, and away we hied, "whistling as we went," and making such a wonderful chime, that the very woods rang again, and Orpheus himself might have listened. The inhabitants of Canterbury, naturally superstitious, were one and all, in a most dismal amazement, as appeared the following day. Some concluded the sounds must proceed from trumpets, others said it was warlike music in the air, betokening war and bloodshed; while a third class verily believed, that the great day of judgment was at hand.

After we had sounded a general alarm, and spent a deal of unnecessary breath, we returned to our quarters, sufficiently wearied, indeed, with the extraordinary exercise.

The next day the whole town was in a ferment, some running hither, some thither, till at length the greater part had assembled at one place, and a religious meeting was held on the gloomy occasion. From a taste for novelty I attended the curious scene, and hardly ever witnessed such a stir among a set of quaking enthusiasts, in my life. The tremor was universal, many crying out, *"What shall I do to be saved?"* In fine, there was a great reformation, as it was called, and it lasted for the space of six months.

Chapter VI

DON JUAN TUFTS

Tippies! to your lovely lasses,
Kindly pledge the brimming bowl;
Nought pure love and wine surpasses;
Or so raps the jocund soul.
Should tomorrow bring vile trouble,
Look for comfort from your purse,
Know content, makes pleasure double;
Banish care, life's foulest curse.

Leaving Canterbury, I hastened to Old Wells, where I met with a jolly shoemaker. At the pressing instance of this laughing son of Crispin, I went home with him, to share, in his company, a bowl or two of grog. While at his house I scraped acquaintance with a tempting daughter of Venus, to whom I warmly paid my addresses, under a borrowed name.

Oft, ere this, had it been my fortune, to stoop to the dominion of the fair sex; the fascinating charms of my new mistress again riveted her fickle captive in voluntary chains. Three weeks rolled away, in this courtship, and to complete the luxury of the scene, I fared most sumptuously, though at the expense of my own purse. I may say, in this place, with the greatest propriety,

With the joys of great Bacchus I quicken'd each sense,
Till my guineas and pounds were transmuted to pence;

In the arms of my mistress, entranc'd ev'ry night,
I pass'd the soft moments in am'rous delight.

At the end of these three weeks, it occurred to my reflection, that I had far outstayed my time, and what was worse, that my full purse had dwindled to the mere dwarf and skeleton of its former glory. This was no pleasing consideration, to be sure; yet I was loath to forego my delicious banquet. The pretty minx had entirely engrossed my affections, at least, for the moment; I therefore dreaded to sound a retreat from her tender embraces. Accordingly, I prolonged my stay till the end of a few more days, by which time the terrors of personal insecurity gained such entire ascendancy over the softer sensations, that I gave way to the dictates of prudence, and hastened my departure from Wells.

The thoughts of my late mistress were soon eradicated from my breast, by the intervention of new cares and new adventures, more especially, by my return to Lee, which took place within a fortnight after I had quitted her society.

At home, however, I was no better than a nuisance, since, fearful of being seen, I could earn nothing; I therefore, took an opportunity to obtain without saying, *"by your leave,"* a complete mare from the enclosure of a neighbor, who must be nameless. I rode but a few furlongs before meeting with a man of my acquaintance whom, though the night was gloomy, I recognized; but as he had not the slightest knowledge of me, I jogged

securely on, intending to reach No. 4, then so called in the first instance. On the way thither a suitable chance occurred of turning the mare for cash, which I seized, and then proceeded on foot.

At Fishersfield, fifteen miles northeast of No. 4, I put up at a tavern for the night; but, through my inadvertency, a glimpse of the well fraught purse (the fruits of my late adventure) was caught accidentally, by mine host of the garter, at the moment of my supplying him with a small matter of change.

In the evening I took notice, that he drank immoderately; insomuch, that it was quite late, ere we had permission to retire to rest. I had been in bed, as I conjectured, upwards of an hour, when I overheard people whispering in the adjoining room. Listening awhile, I imagined the conversation to be between the landlord and his spouse; it appeared they were in a kind of dispute about something, though I heard scarce enough of the subject to conjecture what. At length, elevating their tones to a more audible pitch, I heard the woman say distinctly, "That won't do, for such a thing can never be hid." "Hold your damn'd tongue (retorted the man) and let me alone." This uttered, they conversed again in so low a key, that it was impossible to guess at the purport; though the accents of the landlady resembled those of lamentation. Soon after I conceived her to be weeping. This made me conjecture, that I was the subject of altercation; and that the landlord had predetermined

some scheme of robbery, or perhaps murder. Those thoughts weighed so powerfully on my imagination, that, instantly, I should have quitted the horrid mansion, if the thing had been morally practicable; but since it was not, I saw no remedy, but to lie still, and watch while morning; if, happily, I should remain undisturbed, till then. However, this dubious scene existed but a few minutes, ere I overheard some one busy at the kitchen fire, as if in the act of raking up the embers; and, quickly after, the landlord entered my apartment with a massy fire shovel in his fist, the weapon being held in a proper position to give a decisive blow. He advanced toward my bedside (for by the light of the moon through the casement, I could see distinctly) with cautious steps. My pistols were also ready, at the moment; intending, therefore, to give my assailant the handsomest reception, I sprung on end, and aiming one of those speedy messengers of destruction toward his breast, bade him advance an inch further, and I would sacrifice him to Dagon. At this unexpected salute, he stopped short, which gave me time to convince him, that I was armed, and should certainly take his life, if he attempted the least mischief; but in case he preferred an armistice, and going to bed, it would be well, otherwise I should consider him an assassin, and deal with him accordingly. As the villain thought to have caught me napping, he was unprepared for opposition; and seeing little else than hard blows for his encouragement, he grew sick of the unpromising enterprise. Thus situated,

he began to apologize, begging me to overlook his misconduct, or to impute it to the effects of strong drink, which he declared, had overwhelmed his natural reason. Being willing to admit of any excuses, however specious, to be once rid of the troublesome rascal, I told him I could pardon the whole, on condition of his using me with civility for the future. This he promised, protesting I should live like a king, without money or price, let my stay at his house be ever so lengthy.

Thus ending without bloodshed, this extraordinary affair, the landlord withdrew to his own lodging, making no further disturbance till morning; but for my life I was unable to tranquilize my spirits, so as to obtain the least quiet repose.

This was a night prolific of terrors, for, in the course of it, I experienced another alarm, which turned out, in the end, to be nothing but an old horse, that came beating about the house in search after salt, or some such savory article.

In the morning, early, I arose from my pillow of thorns, and the landlord, as a kind of compensation for his nocturnal disturbances, entertained me, Scot free, upon the very best his house afforded; but as soon as I had taken breakfast, and regaled sufficiently, I bade adieu to the detested spot, and resumed my circuitous rambles.

Having passed through Number four, I wheeled to the right about; came, in a short time to Nottingham, and soon arrived at Hampton-Falls. Here I wheedled away

a large dog, and sold him near Newbury, for ten shillings; but had crossed the Ferry, scarce twenty minutes, when the dog returned to me by swimming. I ventured into a house in Newburyport, and sold him a second time for six shillings, good money; then taking the road to Bradford, I went on about two miles, when my faithful dog again overtook me. At Bradford I parted with him a third and last time, for about one dollar more; so that, on the whole, my trusty dog turned to a pretty good account. I halted at Bradford just long enough to replenish with food, when my journey was renewed with increased ardor, adopting a sort of disguise, and altering my name, frequently, with a view to baffle pursuit.

One day I called into a gentleman's house, who happened to know me, and who had heard much of my (ill) fame. This man was possessed of a valuable horse, which I examined with some attention. Noticing this, he inquired if I coveted the animal; my answer being in the positive, he proceeded in the following strain: *"This horse I keep closely locked up, and guarded by sentries every night; so, if you can make out to steal him, you shall be extremely welcome, and never be called to account for so doing."* I could not but marvel as much at this declaration, as at the very prudent care the gentleman took of his horse; but, on further inquiry, I discovered that he had himself bought him of a thief, and that, being apprehensive of a clandestine visit from the primitive owner, he had taken the above precautions to secure his purchase.

Feeling somewhat nettled, as a gentleman of my profession would, at being bantered thus, I resolved to execute some stratagem for the attainment of the horse; I went away, and procuring a quart bottle of rum, and adding a suitable quantity of opium, tarried till late in the evening; I then drew near the stable, where I knew the courser must be. Here I was hailed by a couple of servant men, who demanded my motives for traveling at that season of the night. I told them that the object of my pursuit was a thief, named *Henry Tufts,* who had stolen my horse; but that I believed I had gotten already in advance of him. They said they had frequently heard of that gentleman, and that he was accounted the greatest knave and most arrant horse-thief in all that country.

Our dialogue growing familiar, I finally concluded to make a halt in this place, that Tufts might arrive. Meantime I expressed a desire to purchase a little rum to cheer my spirits that cold evening; but being told that none could be attained in that quarter; without more ceremony I took out my bottle, and, tasting of the contents, offered it to my new acquaintance, who received the gratuity with cordiality. Upon the whole, making a quick dispatch of the liquid, I could but admire at its sudden effects, which were such, that immediately my *pot-companions* were both stretched on the ground, encircled in the arms of Morpheus. By searching their pockets I found the key of the stable, which I unlocked and directly

had the pleasure of fixing myself on the back of a very fine horse.

Avoiding the glare of day, I rode him a night or two, till, being out of harm's way, I exchanged him for another horse, and received as boot, thirty-five dollars in ready cash. This last horse I sold for forty dollars more; and, with the property, made a speedy decampment. Thus, my late undertakings, however villainous, had been successful; but fickle fortune had now like to have turned the scale; for, at this juncture, I came within *an ace* of being detained, as a deserter by a certain Lieutenant belonging to the army; from whose fangs I luckily escaped. . . .

Feeling a degree of exultation at the sight of my pecuniary success, I purchased an elegant suit of wearing apparel, a laced hat and embroidered waistcoat with other articles of equal value. To these I added rings of gold, to adorn my dainty fingers, and a costly watch to decorate my fob. In this splendid garb, I continued my travels as far as the town of Hudson, in New York. Here, one night, I took shelter in a house, in which were two young ladies, the one as Rachel, very beautiful, the other as Leah, not only tender eyed, but, whose whole contour of physiognomy was irregular, uncouth and forbidding, to a proverb. I scraped some acquaintance with both; but felt the most irresistible inclination to make the more beautiful miss my companion for the night. As it fell out, we all three lodged in the second story of the house,

though in separate apartments. Unable to conquer my insatiable desire, I even mustered courage, with silent steps, to invade the precincts of the handsomest damsel; and had the supreme felicity to find her so far from obstinacy, that at the first summons she surrendered the castle, and admitted a friendly parley, till morning. Even yet, O, memory, thou presentest to view, this feast of love, as of yesternight; how delighted, how transported was I, with the elegant person of my fine companion! The hours passed away in transports of ecstasy unutterable; nor was the potent charm dissolved till Phœbus shot his officious beams through the casement, and imparted to my, till now intoxicated senses, a view of surrounding objects. But paint now in imagination, who can, my surprise, my confusion, when I saw myself encircled in the arms of the ill-favored, the rejected damsel, in close contact, with the same bundle of deformity, whom I had contemplated with such cold indifference, such killing disgust, the preceding evening. The scene was truly farcical; I was planet struck; what surprise she noticed in my aspect, I pretend not to say; but she demanded with a sarcastic sneer, whether I had been deceived in my partner, I answered that I had been confoundedly so.—"*See,* cried she, *the force of imagination.*" Her logic was irrefragable; but, as I wished, for cogent reasons, to wave further discussion, I quitted the house abruptly; and upon revolving in my mind, as I paced the street, the ludicrous adventures of the night, came to the following resolution;

never to differ with a wife, much less a mistress, upon so light and trivial a consideration, as the want of external beauty.

The present journey was long and intricate. In the course of it I visited the high lands near West Point, and had the mortification to see a number of Pennsylvania riflemen receive one hundred lashes each, as a punishment for the rescue of some prisoners.

From West Point my rambles were vague and fortuitous, till I reached Vermont. Having passed through a portion of that state, the whim took me to visit, in rotation, the town of Claremont, to gain sight, if possible, of Sally Judd, my former mistress and almost wife. The delightful scenes I had passed in her company, recurred afresh to my recollection, and induced a secret wish, that similar scenes might again occur; but of this there was no present prospect, nor could I expect to renew a connection, which had thus long been dissolved.

At Claremont I put up at Spencer's tavern, and having money sufficient for present exigencies, allotted to tarry in the place several days. Sally and her friends were the objects of my earliest inquisition. I learned that she still remained unwedded, and resided, as formerly at her father's house. I had a peculiar fancy to see and converse with her; but, in truth, had not the effrontery to approach her father's dwelling, so that, should I meet her at all, it must be, I supposed, by mere accident.

The day after my arrival at Spencer's, came in a

stranger, a genteel, well looking man, who, on committing his steed to the hostler, assumed a seat near mine; we entered into a familiar conversation. His deportment was affable and engaging, and his appearance that of a man of sense and information. He tarried in my company till near night, and then talked of the prosecution of his journey. I hinted, that, as the close of the day was so near at hand, to travel far must be out of the question; and that, consequently, he had better postpone his departure till morning. In return, he observed, that his absence from home had been tedious, and that still he had a lengthy journey to perform; that having but little money to defray expenses, diligence, in his circumstances, became a matter of expediency. If that be the case, (said I) as you are a stranger, and must need be in want of refreshment, if you choose to stop here I will discharge your reckoning with pleasure. He finally concluded to tarry, and thanked me in handsome terms for my civility.

The hours passed agreeably till bedtime, when the new guest proposed our sleeping in the same bed. I could have no objections, so having retired to rest, we resumed the theme of our former conversation. Our intimacy improving, he inquired whether he might venture to entrust me with a secret? I replied, that he might, without the least scruple, even if it concerned his life. This being settled, he told me "his name was Whiting; that he had long been an agent for the British, who had now employed him as an emissary to explore the country, and cir-

culate counterfeit money. That, as Congress had issued a paper medium to raise armies, and pay off their troops, it imported their adversaries to discredit the currency as effectually as possible. And, as such large quantities of paper, had been emitted already, the speediest way to effect the entire dissolution of that system was to inundate the country with counterfeit bills. I have now with me, a large sum, in money, of that description, executed in a very masterly manner, and can supply you in the morning with a competent sum, if you think you can pass it to advantage." I thanked him for his liberality, and confessed I should be glad of a small quantity, which I had no scruple of putting off without difficulty.

This was the substance of our evening discourse; agreeably to which, the next morning, before leaving the chamber, he counted me out upwards of one thousand dollars. I expressed some anxiety, lest it might discommode him to part with so considerable a sum; but he replied; "No, no, I can spare it very well, as I have, now, fifty thousand dollars in my pocket. However, I should be glad of a little silver to discharge bills, at particular places, and if you could supply me with a trifle, I should esteem it a great favor." As I was pleased at the opportunity of requiting, in some measure, my benefactor, I handed him three dollars, for which I had his peculiar thanks.

This important business being adjusted, we descended into the parlor, and joined the rest of the company. Mr.

Whiting stayed to breakfast, and then took his leave; but never, since that morning, have I had the satisfaction to behold his face.

On the same day of my receiving the spurious bills, curiosity prompted me to make experiment of their currency. On trial, I found not the slightest difficulty in passing them. Indeed my bills were such an exact imitation of the genuine ones, that a man must have had more penetration than ordinary, to have discerned the slightest difference.

I now found that my new fund of money would turn, doubtless, to good account; yet, as it daily depreciated, I supposed it my wisest course to lay out a considerable quantity of it the first opportunity. Accordingly I purchased a good horse, a new suit of clothes, and materials for a complete suit of female apparel: the last I sent, as a present, to poor Sally, accompanied with a message, that I wished to see and converse with her before leaving the vicinity. She accepted the offer with gratitude. I intended this offering as some kind of atonement for the damage her character had sustained through my means.

A day or two after this, hearing that Sally was on a visit at a neighbor's house, I went to see her. Our interview was interesting; I attempted an apology for former transgressions, but my excuses did not obviate the severity of her censures. After a lengthy conference, in which were discussed our former concerns, I took leave, to

present her at parting with fifty of those very dollars which I had received of Whiting.

Thus, having negotiated at Claremont the business nearest my heart, I meditated a sudden removal; bidding, therefore, adieu to all, I mounted my nag, and departed from the neighborhood. I had not traveled many miles before I had the address to traffic away my horse for money and goods; which articles I transported like an honest man, to my own family, well knowing they must be thrice welcome there. . . .

[Not daring to stay at Lee, Tufts goes to Berwick where he engages in what he pleasantly calls the "courtship" of a young lady. She finally suggests marriage, which he considers imprudent, since his "sparrow," as he calls her, lives so near his own home and family. He returns to Dover, "the land of alewives, lawyers and clay," and thence "conveys" a horse to Lee. He is involved in difficulties. It is the late autumn of 1780. He meets his old associate, James Smith, and with him wanders about the country, engaged in petty larcenies. Near Allenstown they have made themselves so obnoxious that they are attacked one morning at their camp-fire, by an armed posse. Tufts flees to a river, and like Eliza, escapes across the ice. Smith is captured and taken to Exeter jail. Tufts departs for "the Kennebec country."]

Chapter VII

BREAKS NEWBURYPORT JAIL

Behold the vagrant! on he hies,
While happiness before him flies:
Attach'd to vice, to virtue blind,
Misfortunes cannot cure his mind.
The wicked, says a well known text,
Like troubled seas, and oceans vex'd,
Cast miry dirt, as on they sweep,
From the low caverns of the deep.

In this interesting tour I passed over a large portion of eastern territory; but still dreading to return to my native State, went to Pigwacket and thence to Saratoga with full purpose of mind to leave my own country, forever and to reside somewhere in the settlements of Upper Canada.

From Saratoga, I advanced towards Quebec, and putting up, one night, at a humble cot, received of my entertainer the detail of a tragical event, which took place in that quarter a short time prior to my arrival. Without apology for the episode I shall give it a place here.

Three of our countrymen had been hunting, it seems, for several months in the wilderness, north of Saratoga; when, it happened that one of them, named Abbot, took it into his head, in the absence of his partners, to visit their traps. This was an imprudent step to be sure, be-

cause the woods were infested with hostile Indians, who kept the frontiers in consternation, and did no small mischief.—Abbot reached the traps unmolested, but while busied in securing the game, unhappily for him, he was discovered and taken captive by six Indians.

The savages soon formed the horrid conclusion of putting their prisoner to a painful and lingering death; and, in order to execute the infernal purpose, led him off to some distance, where having gagged and prostrated the wretched victim on his back, they cut holes through his wrists and heels, between the bones and tendons, in such a manner as to draw *metump lines* and green withes, through the apertures. Then extending his arms and legs to a degree exquisitely painful, they, with the ligatures above mentioned, lashed him fast to four small trees; which bloody exploit finished, those horrid hell-hounds left the writhing sacrifice, and withdrew to a cluster of bushes, with intent to make merry, and enjoy, in idea, the excruciating tortures of the sufferer. Meanwhile, as Abbot returned not to his anxious companions, they began to be solicitous for his welfare, and set out in quest of him accordingly.

Coming to the hunting ground, and not finding whom they sought, they were quite at a loss what route to pursue. But observing the dog, which they had led thus far in a string, to be very urgent for going in a particular direction; they knew not but something especial might be the cause of his earnestness.

They therefore gave him his own humor, and by following the sagacious animal, as he led the way, came in a few minutes upon their partner Abbot, stretched and bound in the above related manner. With trembling haste they released him from his horrible confinement; and, having two guns well charged, agreed to venture up within shot of the Indians, whom they now heard at some distance in the height of their rejoicing. Advancing with much caution to a proper station, they made a halt, leveled their pieces, and, at a given signal, both fired at the same instant. To their great satisfaction they found that each shot had taken the best possible effect; four of the tawny rogues were killed outright, and a fifth so crippled, as to be incapable of flight. The sixth and only remaining Indian fled for his life. At this moment our hunters let loose their faithful dog, which overtook the fugitive in a trice, and before they could gain the spot, had destroyed his prey in a manner too shocking to relate. These savages reaped the reward of their cruelty, being killed to a man; but Abbot survived, and is now living, it is said, in the district of Maine.

I sojourned several days with the person, who made me this rehearsal; in which time he gave me such unfavorable accounts of the Canadian territories, and of the severity of their laws and customs, particularly, in the chastisement of offenders, that I grew skitish of consequences, and resolved to shun even the barriers of a country, so rigid in its internal police, as to destroy entirely my favorite

schemes.* Relinquishing therefore all present ideas of voluntary expatriation, I shifted my course, went down to number four (now Charlestown) and thence, after the respite of a few days, returned back to Lee. This was, indeed, a trying season; for as my last excursion had been attended with every loss and expenditure, I had brought home little or nothing to bear my own charges, much less to make glad the hearts of expecting relatives.

It was immediately famed abroad that Tufts had returned, and as former evils existed in abundance, I was obliged to be extremely circumspect to avoid surrounding difficulties. Many were officiously anxious that I should be caught and punished, regarding me as a pest to society, and my nefarious misdeeds as altogether insufferable. Their perseverance caused me unceasing solicitude; I still persisted, however, in my former practices, in defiance of public reprobation, or legal menaces.

At this juncture an adventurer arrived, John Sandborn by name, a droll, unlucky chap, very light-fingered, but unworthy even of *my* confidence. In a word: being a man pretty much of my own kidney; we associated together at all convenient seasons; my cottage being selected as the place of our common rendezvous. By robbing friends and foes indiscriminately, we became the scourges of the community, while our mischievous pranks, though a source of complaint far and near, afforded us

* Many of our professional criminals still have this unfavorable view of Canada and its penal system.

(alas, the depravity of human minds) nought but exultation and triumph. Custom and habit gain ground imperceptibly; and I may declare from experience, that the farther a man travels in dissolute courses, the less will be his compunction when deviating from the paths of uprightness. To this effect sings the poet:

> "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As to be hated needs but to be seen;
> But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

It will be necessary to pass over, in this place many incidents, which, after so considerable a lapse, I recollect but indistinctly; and which, though retained in memory, would be too trivial for recital. The following may claim some attention.

One evening, when my "boon companion," and myself had been out upon a customary expedition, and were returning homeward richly laden with booty; chancing to pass by Lieut. John Burleigh's house, we espied two shirts, as we supposed, suspended on a pole for the purpose of drying. Without so much as asking leave, however light, we made free to snatch both, and hastened to our usual retreat. The next morning, on review of the spoils, we found, that in lieu of two shirts, we had brought home a couple of (the ladies will pardon the expression) elegant smocks. In want of a shirt each, the disappointment was a little mortifying; but being in the habit of making even *shifts*, upon emergency, we thought it not impossible to

transform a couple of them into as many shirts; so we agreed to adjourn to the woods to accomplish that purpose. Having procured thread and needles, with other necessary apparatus, away we trudged; and after some research, finding a secluded spot, that promised complete security from intrusion, down we sat, and commenced the elaborate process. But the rays of the sun falling with a little more intensity, than accorded with my feelings, I stripped off coat and waistcoat, and to work we went. Sandborn being himself a piece of a tailor, (a small thing indeed) undertook to be foreman, and as my own father had been the ninth part of a man, by trade, I could sew a pretty tolerable seam; all which considered, we had little doubt of bringing the business to a fortunate conclusion. As a beginning, Sandborn cut off a large slice from the bell muzzle of each, in order to eke out the sleeves, and fabricate a couple of delicate collars with their appendages. Those pieces were adjusted, after a queer fashion, to the uses designed; our work went on, to be sure, swimmingly, and was fast approximating to a close, when, suddenly the whole was interrupted by the unhoped for appearance of some six or eight men, who had turned out that morning in search after the aggressors. They might be fifty paces distant, when I caught a first glance, as they crept silent, through the bushes; wishing, therefore, to take time by the forelock, remembering he was bald behind, I threw aside my unfinished shirt, and took instantly to my heels. Sandborn did the like; we

ran through thick and thin, with the agility of a couple of mountain stags, and were out of sight and hearing in a twinkling. Thus were our sharp-sighted neighbors disappointed of their aim, for the present. I was chagrined at the loss of the shirts (or rather shifts) as may be conjectured; but more so at that of my other garments. The spoils were gathered by the victors, who restored the two smerries,* in their mutilated condition, to the primitive owners, who happened to be two young women, then on a visit at the lieutenant's. It is almost needless to add, that these pretty articles, by passing through our hands, had undergone such a strange metamorphosis, as to be useless to the young ladies, as far as it concerned their original destination. The foregoing incident was a matter of merriment to as many as heard of it, and the poor girls had to bear a load of railery, for indulging the licentious Tufts in an intimacy of such close concern.

One evening, after the above, as I was passing by Stratham meeting house, it occurred abruptly to my recollection, that I had seen a splendid cushion within, and that it might be of great utility in my forlorn condition; not reflecting that the horrid crime of sacrilege would then be annexed to the catalogue of my iniquities. I therefore, wheeled up to the church, and without deference to the sanctity of the place, made bold to enter through a

* Smerries. The meaning is obvious, but the word does not seem to be known to dictionary makers. Perhaps it is Tufts' invention, to avoid repeating "smocks,"—a word so indelicate, in his opinion, that he has had to apologize for its use.—*E.P.*

ground window. Making prize of the cushion, I conveyed it, in the first instance to Exeter, and there sold the ticking and feathers to a confidential person. The exterior covering, which was green plush, I carried to Lee, and after giving it a different complexion, had it converted into a pair of small clothes, which lasted beyond calculation, and did me eminent service. . . .

About this period was completed a collection of necessaries, that had cost me no small time and trouble in preparing. It consisted of a number of augers, with a compass and other saws of various descriptions, calculated to facilitate the breaking through strongholds; to which were added a variety of false and spring keys, so constructed, as to open almost any sort of lock. Those instruments I deposited in several places, in order to have them in readiness upon special occasions. My inducements in providing this resource, resulted not only from past experience of their utility; but from the probability, that yet existed, of my needing such implements in future; unless eventually I should cultivate some emendation of morals, and forsake the illicit game of thieving, of which, at present, I did not see the most remote prospect. I imagine my keys must have been viewed, as a curiosity, by such as were unused to the sight of such rarities; the construction of them, however, is so simple, as to easily be imitated or made by any smith of common ingenuity; and when judiciously fashioned, are of such extensive application, that one key will fit a great variety of locks. I

am positive, that, with this assortment of keys, I could have opened, without violence, almost any lock I ever saw; this I am assured by experience, which is indeed the touchstone of truth.

While noticing these particulars, I would observe likewise, that I now kept on hand, or in suitable places of deposit, a variety of paints of different colors; by means of which, I could so alter the looks of any horse, that the owner must be puzzled to know him again while the disguise lasted, which was usually a week or more, unless the paint were sooner displaced by hard riding or rainy weather.

I also kept on hand, several setts of cork shoes, covered with sole leather; these I used frequently, to fasten round my horses feet, to prevent the sound of his footsteps being heard; I have often surprised people, for favorite purposes, by this contrivance.

I also furnished myself with vitriol, aqua fortis, and other corrosive ingredients, to soften or eat away iron. Those liquids I sometimes carried in a phial, tied up in the club of my hair; while the blades of my compass-saws were frequently concealed, between the soles of my shoes. A number of the articles, above enumerated, I confided to the keeping of confidential friends, of whom I had now a connected string, reaching from New York, to the District of Maine; and from thence through Vermont to Canada line. But to return:

After passing upon Sandborn the imposition above

noticed, I took up my abode at the house of one Doe, in Newmarket, and assisted him on hire. This man was in good wordly circumstances, but so distracted, at times, as to be quite incapable of transacting business. I had been more or less acquainted with him for a number of years, and had acquired a decent knack at managing his irregular sallies.

One day, we went to a pasture, three miles distant, for the purpose of docking a number of Steers; having made the purposed amputation, and feeling fatigued with the exercise, we called into a house, hard by, to rest ourselves. Here taking in hand, one of the tails, I transformed it so as to resemble an elegant false tail; then in fashion. On our way homeward we called into one Hilton's, who was absent; but to his son, a young man, who was at home, I proffered the false tail, for about a dollar. Want of money was his only objection to the purchase; I therefore offered to take corn, which, indeed, was at that time a scarce article. Accordingly the young fellow coveting the curiosity, measured me up a bushel and a half of this staff of life, which, throwing upon Doe's horse, and resigning the dear-bought bubble, I scoured off with all imaginable industry.

Doe and I on returning to his house were informed that a certain Physician, now nameless, had sent word in our absence, that he allotted visiting his brother Doe and family the next day. At the mention of the Doctor's name remembering a mischief he had formerly done me,

I now resolved to digest and execute some friendly scheme, in requital of old favors. Accordingly I drew Doe aside, and, practicing on his credulity, told him, that I had learned the object of the Doctor's visit. "What is it?" inquired he, with some earnestness. "I don't like to tell, answered I, unless you promise secrecy, as I have no mind to be called to quorum for broaching the mystery." "Oh! you never shall, returned he, you may rest easy as to that." "Why, then, quoth I, your head is sometimes out of tune, you know, and the Doctor has a whim in his, that he can facilitate your cure." "That would be good in him, (cried Doe) and, for ought I know he might contribute to my recovery, though, to speak truth, I have but a scurvy opinion of his medical abilities." "But, continued I, the Doctor says your disorder is very difficult to eradicate, and that emasculation will be the only effectual remedy; he intends therefore, to come with suitable auxiliaries to perform on you that salutary operation." "Do you imagine queried he, that the Doctor has any such thing in view." "Most assuredly cried I; there has been a counsel of Doctors upon the question already, and nem. con. they have advised that measure as the only radical cure in your circumstances." "Damn him then, said Doe, you shall see how I will look out for him." "Pray, said I, don't mention that I gave you the least hint of this affair, as I wish above all things, to keep clear of blame." "Never fear, said he, your name shall be had in request neither pro nor con."

The next morning, Doe equipped himself, as I took notice, with a large ox-goad, which he laid by against time of need, and then kept a bright look out for the Doctor. At length espying him aloof, he flew out of doors with his trusty tickler, and took post in a spot the most convenient for his adversary's reception. Presently the Doctor, alighting from his steed, advanced without scruple, to give his kinsman a morning salutation. Doe, instead of returning the compliment, discharged three or four horrible wipes across the Doctor's backsides and shoulders; which threw him into the habit of cutting more curious capers, than though he had felt the bite of the tarantula. The poor son of Esculapius unable to abide the outrageous attack, fled in amazement to his horse, and thinking, that, in the way of flight, four legs must have the advantage of two, attempted to remount, which, at last, he accomplished. But his horse, sad to relate! not feeling in common with his master, the same powerful provocatives for quickening his pace, stood motionless, unwilling to move in the least, notwithstanding the hearty kicks and curses of his impatient rider. At this unfavorable moment, Doe came up, and renewed the charge with pristine vigor; so that the luckless Doctor, ere he could subdue the patient animal's stupidity, or make him budge an inch ahead, was forced to abide another consoling flagellation, which his assailant now administered with no less liberality than at the beginning of the onset. By this time, however, the horse had acquired such a degree

of mobility, as conveyed both himself and rider out of the reach of further injury; the Doctor exclaiming, as he jogged away, that Doe was stark mad to be sure, and himself bruised to a mummy. While I, who had been a tranquil spectator of the turbid scene, was inclined to suppose, that, in lieu of bootless complaints, he had more cause to rejoice, escaping as he did, not indeed with his skin, but with bones unbroken.

Just after this, at the instance of several soldiers, who, on expiration of their furloughs, were about returning to the army, I was hunted from post to pillar; and, at last, surprised by one Frost and others, in a clump of bushes, where I had sought concealment from their researches. Their exultation at taking the atrocious offender, who had so long baffled pursuit, was superabundant; and so strong a guard was placed over my person that all attempts to escape must have been quixotic and chimerical. In this cautious manner they conveyed me to Exeter, and consigned me to the custody of Lt. Boynton, who had directions to conduct his prisoner to the army. It was now toward the close of our revolutionary war; yet I dreaded to be returned as a deserter, and was, therefore, solicitous to prevent that evil; however, as the means of avoidance were not obvious, I acquiesced from pure necessity, and resolved to meet my destiny whatever it might be, with becoming fortitude.

Lt. Boynton escorted me as far as Newburyport; but instead of proceeding onward, as were my expectations,

he had me secured in the jail in that place. This fell out much to my satisfaction, for golden hope once more revived, that I should yet obtain the means of escape.

I continued in confinement three weeks, without attempting the smallest maneuver to advance my enlargement; at which time, Richard Dennis, frequently introduced to the reader ere this, happened to arrive at the Port, in a coasting vessel. This notable tanquam, hearing of his old friends misfortune, paid me a visit the first evening, and furnished me with a key saw, fixed in a bow, for the business of cutting iron. By way of requital I gave him a couple of crowns. But the very night I received the saw, Dennis broke open the public magazine and took thence seven barrels of powder, conveying the whole on board his vessel. The next morning, exposing to sale, a parcel of the commodity to some hucklers, he was suspected of obliquity in its acquirement, and immediately taken into custody. At this moment discovery was made that the magazine had been opened; so that, his guilt becoming incontestible, he was honored with a residence in the same apartment of the prison with myself.

When all had withdrawn, and we were at liberty to converse freely, Dennis, after a momentary pause, broke silence in the following words: "Now everything will come handy, and we shall be ready to break jail, I trust, very soon; let us go to work, my boy, with all diligence." To this proposal I was perfectly agreed, and to work we went. Our instruments were two old case knives, and

the saw above mentioned. The knives were converted into a couple of saws also, by hacking them across each other, and in this way they served to make a crease in the grates, while the key-saw widened the notch. At the top of the jail was a weathercock, fixed on an iron spindle, which as often as the wind blew, emitted a creaking sound, that drowned entirely the noise of our saws. We deemed this a fortunate circumstance and never failed to take advantage of it, shaping our course according to the wind.

In this manner we finished cutting off, though of monstrous magnitude, all the grates belonging to a certain window, except one which held by the bigness of a sixpenny nail. Nothing more, than the removal of the grates, being requisite, we purposed to break jail, and depart, as soon as darkness should permit. I conceived myself quite secure of elopement, as everything had succeeded, thus far, to the extent of our wishes. At this crisis, when hope was fairly fledged, and expectation on the wing, Dennis most preposterously overturned our whole system, by yielding to the dictates of his old master Silenus; or in other words, by quaffing his favorite brandy, so greedily, as to reach almost the end of his journey, complete inebriation. I remonstrated against the palpable impropriety of his conduct, but in vain: he grew noisy, and having drained the grief-subduing bowl, began to vociferate for more liquor. I interposed; but Dennis, as if actuated by some more evil spirit, than brandy itself,

persisted in calling to the bar-keeper. His clamors, however, were disregarded: all seemed inattentive, but his impatience had grown too ardent for control; regardless of consequences, therefore, he thrust his key-saw out of the scuttle, and gave a still more forcible rap. Precisely at that instant, Mr. Ingals, the jailor happening to pass by, observed the saw, which he struck with his hand so forcibly, that it flew quite across the entry: he then left us in a condition to be envied by those only, who are just going to be hanged. Dennis well knew he had been the sole cause of this great mischief; he raved like a mad man, and turning to me, with confusion of countenance, complained bitterly of his loss. I reproached him severely for his extreme folly; protested he deserved hanging, and that probably such would be his destiny in a short time. To those invectives he courageously replied: "Never mind it, my son, we shall do well enough yet, I will fix a plaister for this sore, as sure as my name is Dennis." In this manner we conversed, till Mr. Ingals returned, with several followers, to discover what mischief had been effected. Unlocking the door, they entered with mattocks and axes; and soon discerned the fissures in the grates, all which, at a single blow dropped out. At this unpleasing spectacle the keeper was indignant; fire flashed from his eyes, and he gave us a reprimand not easily to be forgotten. Our removal into a lower cell, esteemed the firmest in the whole prison, was the immediate result of this ill fated discovery.

One Doctor Rand from Londonderry, was now locked up in the same room with Dennis and myself; he had been recently imprisoned for uttering counterfeit money. Never, perhaps, did a more illustrious trio meet together within the same walls. One Sawyer also, at this crisis, was a tenant of the prison. That hero had likewise been concerned (so said report) in making or passing counterfeit bills; and, as Rand was the only witness against him, Sawyer offered me one hundred dollars, if I would contrive to set him at liberty.

The room, which had now the honor of our reception, had been lately repaired; and, whether by carelessness or accident, a crow bar and smith's hammer had been left behind. These tools we immediately seized; but expecting their momentary reclamation, we had the forecast to insure a timely use of them. With the bar were immediately ripped up a short plank and two pieces of iron netting. This exploit was achieved about the middle of the afternoon; and though many people were then passing and repassing, no one overheard or suspected our employment. I have frequently found the benefit of attempting these operations by day, in preference to the night; because when people are stirring, and occupied in their own concerns, less attention is paid to any noise or disturbance in prison, than in the silent hours of darkness.

As Dennis and I had already made a sufficient breach to admit of a free passage through the vault, we ceased all

further examination till late in the evening. When hearing, in the outer rooms, a collection of young people busily engaged in dancing and making merry (Ingals and his wife being absent) we imagined this the favorable moment, in which to make an end of our business. To this end Dennis took the iron bar, and descended into the cavity to pry out a parcel of stones which made the underpinning of the building. He had begun to make some opening, when suddenly the ground gave way, and a cart load of rocks, at least, tumbled, with great violence, into the vault. Dennis came within a hair's breadth of being overwhelmed in the ruins; by a sudden backward motion, however, he just escaped that dreadful catastrophe; still he was so miserably bespattered with filth, which entered both his mouth and throat, that I verily thought he must have suffocated, at last. At this critical juncture, Rand and I joined in a hurricane dance, to divert, if possible, the attention of the rabble from the thunder of the descending stones. Our expedient succeeded; for the noise, though heard in the adjacent rooms, and for nearly a quarter of a mile round, was yet mistaken generally, for the rattling of wheels over the stony pavements of the town; all therefore passed off, without particular notice.

The tumult subsiding, Rand and I descended to the spot, where Dennis was yet standing; we there found a convenient bridge spread over the bottom of the vault, by means of the stones which had precipitated therein. Their

removal had also opened a spacious passage into the jail yard; into which we immediately passed in single file, and made good our retreat from the prison walls with hasty strides. Within the first gun shot we met Ingals and wife returning from their evening excursion.

It was so very dark, that he distinguished not his no longer prisoners, but bidding us good night, passed on. Dennis, being in a dismal pickle, from his woeful familiarity with the vault, now left us and steered directly for the river, to wash off some small portion of his recent plaistering; but he returned to us no more.

Rand and I traveled directly to Bradford, a distance of seven miles, and repaired to the house of Sawyer, whom we had left in prison. Here we procured for sustenance some bread and cheese, which was the only fraction of one hundred dollars, promised by Sawyer, that I ever obtained.

Quitting this place, though the night was obscure and chilly, we made toward the town of Palmer, using the utmost diligence in flight; for, in truth, our minds were not yet exempt from the terrors of pursuit. The first living object we meet on the road was a horse saddled and bridled; him thus sent by fortune, we made bold to mount, and rode at a round trot, about twelve miles; when espying several men, making, as we supposed, towards us, we left the horse, and struck out of the beaten road. Here we had to traverse through many winding tracks and by-paths; notwithstanding which, we reached Palmer

before sun-rise, and took shelter in the woods. This town is about twenty-five miles from Newburyport.*

Here Rand had paid his devoirs to a young woman; but being at this time, wretchedly clad, and wishing to appear to better advantage, as he said, in the presence of his mistress, he was urgent that I should accommodate him with a suit of spare clothes, which I had hitherto preserved through all difficulties. I hesitated, but on his promising, faithfully to restore them the next morning; and in the interim to provide me some place of abidance in security, I delivered him the whole suit. To do him a more particular kindness, I lent him linen, shoes and stockings, to which I added six crowns in money; that sum being every penny I could call my own. Rand was now accommodated to his wish; but as he was perfectly known in these parts, he dared not appear openly; he, therefore, prevailed on me to go to the habitation of his mistress, and to entreat her (in his name) to favor him with a visit in his present retirement. The girl honored the invitation, taking with her a pot of hot coffee, beefsteaks, and other ingredients for our morning repast. After Rand and I had made a plentiful meal, which, in our present exigent state, was indeed, epicurean; he expressed a wish to withdraw further into the bushes, under pretext of enjoying with his mistress a more private conference. They were absent nearly an hour, when the girl

* If the present Palmer is meant, this is decidedly an underestimate by modern computation.—*E.P.*

returned, and to my inquiries after Rand, made answer, that he had gone whither I should see him no more; she therefore advised me to shift for myself. What a thunderstroke was this intelligence to my feelings! With what sincere grief did I receive it! He had decamped with my best clothes, as well as all my money. I had, in truth, entertained but a slender opinion of this man's probity from our first acquaintance; little dreaming, however, that he would show me so scurvy a trick, at last; more especially after having used him so handsomely at that period; and after having, also, procured his deliverance from the horrors of a jail, I thought, at least, that the old adage, "honor among thieves," might have operated upon his feelings.

Destitute, as I now was, of friends and money, and scant of clothing, I knew not well which way to turn; but as no time was to be lost, I formed the hasty conclusion of retracing the country toward Lee.

Taking leave of the young woman, I traveled the remainder of the day, as fast as my legs would carry me; feeling, however, much disquietude at the base treatment I had received. Upon the approach of night I took the highway, and went on with less apprehension, though with greater leisure. I had traveled at so swift a rate and to prevent notice, had taken so many crooked paths, that what with long travel, and want of food, my legs began to decline their customary office. How to procure a mouthful of food, at this period, was the most interesting question.

Chapter VIII

HORSE THIEVES AND SOLDIERS

Life but rises to another stage,
The same dull journey still before us.
CIBBER.

At this moment, absorbed as I was, in unpleasing reflections, and tracing the lonely way in pensive mood, a glistening object caught my eye, in the path. I gave it a kick, and found it to be a large linen handkerchief. It seemed like a gift from heaven, in relief of my peculiar distress; I seized the prize, and eagerly approached a humble cot, that now presented itself to view. In this abode of poverty, I saw no persons, except a woman, and several small children; but to her I offered my handkerchief for a morsel of food. The courteous dame bestirred herself, and quickly spread before me a tolerable supper; declining, however, all compensation. Having sated my appetite, and feeling much invigorated, with the fortunate supply, I pursued the way in solitude, till late in the evening; when happening to espy a strange glimmering light, at a little distance from the road, and wishing to unravel the phenomenon, I turned aside, and presently found, it was but a luminous vapor, ascending from a coal kiln. Groping about, I came across

a man, sound asleep, near whom was a bottle of rum and jug of cider, of both which I drank profusely. On further research, I discovered a basin of victuals tied in a napkin, which I packed into my bundle, and, leaving the owner, to enjoy pleasant dreams, pursued the beaten track, till an ancient barn appeared in view. Feeling, by this time, an invincible propensity to sleep, I entered this old barrack, and obtained a comfortable litter, on which I reposed till morning. At dawn I set forward, and, after marching a few miles, approached a house into which I intended to hazard an entrance. Here as before, were none save females; but they supplied me with breakfast, and gave four shillings in cash for my basin and cloth. I pretended that I was returning home from a visit to a distant relation, living in the west. Leaving this house, I proceeded with more circumspection; but improved my time, so faithfully, as to reach Haverhill ferry about dark. With a number of others I crossed the river unquestioned, and repaired to the house of Mrs. Shepherd; where, finding myself an absolute stranger, I tarried a whole week, defraying all charges by doctoring, which, by the bye, was in great requisition in this vicinity.

Soon, however, as bad luck would have it, came to Mrs. Shepherd's, one Johnson; who, having seen me in times past, recognized my phiz directly, and notified the people of my being a deserter. Without more words, he advanced, and attempted to make me his prisoner. I repelled the assault with disdain; but persisting to press

forward, I knocked him down with a chair. This caused so great a ferment, that several people ran to his aid, and consequently all further resistance, on my part, proved futile and abortive.

Johnson, after this victory, informed the company, that I had enlisted at Exeter, and advised my instant removal thither, tendering his own services, as one of the conductors.

Seeing Johnson was so erroneous, as to the place of my enlistment, I had the less repugnance to attend him; for, I rather preferred a tour to Exeter than elsewhere, supposing the chance at least equal, that I should be liberated on my arrival thither. However, to deceive Johnson and his adherents, I showed much dislike at being carried to Exeter or elsewhere, in this compulsatory manner. At last we got under way; but to avoid prolixity, at this time, I shall wave occurrences on the road, and suppose our journey at an end. When at Exeter, the first step was my arraignment before Col. Dearborn. He, being informed of the object of their visit, searched all his books and papers, but the name of Henry Tufts was not to be found; and no wonder indeed; for, I had enlisted as a soldier in the service of the Bay state. My conductors, thus baffled, were at a nonplus, and could think of nothing better than to give me a dismission. In my turn, I threatened Johnson with a prosecution for the abuse and damage, I had received; to compound which, he paid me five *hard* dollars, this ending the whole business.

Passing, soon after, through Deerfield, I overtook one Hannah Rand, an old acquaintance, and undertook to transport her bundle of clothes to Lee. Before leaving the boundaries of Deerfield, I was unfortunately seen by a number of men, who had acquired a knowledge of my character. They were like hounds, in full chase after me, when I first observed them; I was consequently compelled to stir my stumps with all the celerity I possibly could. Perceiving they gained ground upon me, thus encumbered, I reluctantly dropped Miss Rand's bundle; we had, indeed, a tedious race for it; but, as "needs must go when the devil drives," I cleared them all, out of sight, and escaped entirely. The budget they secured; but Hannah, on their refusal to surrender it, brought her action, and recovered damages against one or more of the ringleaders.

No further obstacles supervened, till I had the pleasure of seeing my friends in Lee; but, inasmuch, it was too cold and uncomfortable to lodge in the woods or barns, as customary, I remained incog. at my father's house. At the end of three weeks, (during which I received no molestation) a number of fellows of the baser sort, happening to espy me through a lattice, came in a tumultuary manner, and surrounded the house; their pretense was that I had stolen a piece of cloth at Packer's falls. Being taken into custody, I was removed to Capt. Tuttle's, who took charge of me till the day following. Meantime a warrant was procured, in virtue of which, after usual formalities, I was committed to Dover jail, and locked up

in the same room with one Ricker, who had been charged with the commission of a rape.

I had not lingered in this lorn receptacle over a week, when a friend of mine, furnished me with a spike gimblet, two saws, and an iron bolt, tools heretofore provided by myself, to meet such contingencies as the present.

Thus armed, I extracted the spikes surrounding the grates, of a window; and by sawing off one grate, took them out every one; but after all, found, to my grief, that the outlet was too narrow to accommodate me with a passage, though I stripped clean to the buff. Three successive trials passed, I viewed the window as impervious, and my labor as entirely frustrated. Ricker, who was a more slender man than myself, made the next trial, and with much ado, succeeded in squeezing through the window, thereby regaining his own freedom; but leaving me in trouble and perplexity.

Quite disheartened, at my cruel disappointment, I reclined on a bench, remaining in a pensive condition for three hours, at least, and entertaining, in the meantime, no other thoughts than the entire abandonment of my scheme. By this time, the night was far advanced; but, at last, it popped into my mind, that I had in my possession, a piece of pork, and some soap, and that it might be profitable to lubricate the passage with those slippery ingredients.

Little time was left for consideration, so I fell to work, and besmeared the window to some purpose. Next

I greased myself notably, and approached, with trembling steps, the much dreaded opening, intending to make this a last final effort.

On trial, my new expedient seemed likely to succeed beyond expectation, for the grease and soap made such material difference, that I could now slide back and forth, by degrees, whereas, before, I stuck fast in the passage. However, I had to struggle, most intolerably, to gain ground, inch by inch, only; and it was not till after many strenuous and desperate exertions, which even now, I remember with horror, that I succeeded in forcing myself, feet foremost, into the street; receiving in my descent to the ground, a most violent concussion, by a fall of twelve or more feet.

I had been so wretchedly bruised and compressed in the scanty passage, that with the addition of the fall, I had great difficulty to stand or go, on reaching terra firma. To cap the whole, my apparel was yet within the prison walls; for fling it out I dared not, till I should ensure my own personal egress. Thus circumstanced, I saw no way of reclaiming the lost goods, but by bringing a small ladder, which I had observed to lean against a neighboring barn. This, naked and shivering with cold, I effected, and by its assistance made out to recover a part of the clothing; but, after all, was constrained to leave my hat; and what, in this frosty night, was still more distressing, my shoes and stockings also. Finding those articles irrecoverable, without the greatest pains, and the sacrifice of

more time than could be spared, I left the prison walls, barefoot and bare legged, and in that grotesque dishabille, set off for Lee. But how I performed, in this wretched predicament, over hubbly, frosty ground, with bare feet, a journey of nine miles, is almost impossible, even for myself to conceive. On arrival at Lee, sheer necessity compelled me to have recourse to the generosity of a friend, who supplied me with shoes, stockings, and half a dollar in money. This enabled me to turn my back, once more, upon home, perceiving that persecution still waved her hideous banner. I wandered on foot, and alone, with much uneasiness, though without cessation, till I arrived at the town of Chester. While in this place, where I made but a short residence, folly induced me to join a company of people, who were displaying their prowess at athletic exercises. They had been raising a saw mill that day, which occasioned the collection. For my own part, I remained a mute spectator, till several people insisted upon my entering the ring. I declined, wishing to remain unnoticed; however, pleas and excuses being useless, I yielded to necessity, and had the address to throw out every competitor.

As I was a stranger, the victory was taken in great dudgeon, by several of the wrestlers, who now attempted to foment a quarrel. To avoid that mischief, I withdrew to the house; but, in the evening, had a hint from an Irish girl, that they were concerting some plan to my damage;

on this I privately absconded; traveled three miles to Moses Underhill's tavern, and there put up for the night.

My lodging was in a chamber, and weariness soon threw me, though a wandering exile, into a sound, delicious slumber; but awaking in the dead of night, I was not a little astonished at feeling by my side, unstripped of his garniture, a rough bedfellow. Unable to english this strange rencontre, I gave him a jog, and demanded his name; but, in hoarse, masculine accents, he deigned no other reply, than, "No matter, lie still." In the morning, on my attempting to rise, he swore bitterly I should never quit the soil, till he had given me, what he termed a dressing; he declared he had followed me three miles for that purpose; and added, that although I had flung out the whole town, he meant to show me it afforded men still, who could give me a flogging. I was somewhat nettled at this blustering harangue; however, I dressed, and descended, with the bully, cheek by jowl, into the kitchen, he discharging, the whole time, a volley of oaths and menaces. Wishing to prevent consequences, I desired the interposition of the landlord, who was a great, black, thickset Irishman, to no purpose; he only inquired, in round Irish, if I feared the fellow; I replied in the negative; but that being a stranger, it was my wish to avoid contention. At the instant I made this reply, in came John Wendal, Esq. of Portsmouth; regardless of which, my antagonist was inflexible in urging on the dispute. He now made at me with fire and fury in his aspect. We

exchanged a number of blows; I had, however, the good fortune to bring him by the board; while, in falling, he upset a table, that stood in the floor completely furnished for breakfast. Still the combat held with redoubled ardor, and ended only from the intervention of the company; whose opinion was, that ample harm had been done already. My opponent had been so roughly handled, in this squabble, that he mentioned not a syllable more of renewing the contest; I therefore, left the town, but not my thanks, for the hospitality of its inhabitants.

Not choosing to revisit the subjacent parts of New Hampshire, I journeyed to Connecticut, and thence to a part of New York, few novelties occurring during the passage. Here I made acquaintance with one Thomas Law, a Dutchman, and took lodgings at his house, calling myself by the name of Thomas Harrington. Law and I agreed shortly, to make a tour to some part of Massachusetts, for the benevolent purpose of stealing a couple of good horses. We traveled as far as Lenox, ere an opportunity presented that pleased us. Here we took a horse of six years old, and a mare of four. We rode them to New Lebanon, and there sold them, taking security, by notes of hand, for the pay. We then proceeded to Hudson, where I was overtaken by one Wright, from New Lebanon, who charged me with stealing two of his horses. He had brought with him, a man, who was not only ready but willing to swear that he had seen me on the back of one of them. I denied the assertion, and that with

the strictest truth; but my declaration meeting no credit, I was carried before a magistrate, and by him committed to prison in the next town. Though I knew myself innocent in respect of Wright's process; yet being sensible, that other accusations might be brought against me with more propriety, I was very desirous of gaining my liberty, prior to the day of trial. To do this, I set fire, one night, to a scuttle window, blowing up the coals with an onion stalk; but, having done my best, the passage still remained too small for my exit, so that, reluctantly, I gave up the project.

Next morning, the High Sheriff, who was a Dutchman, discovered the bold attempt, and removed me into another cell of more stability than the former; here he continued to guard my person with extreme rigidity. Trial soon came on, in the course of which, the aforesaid witness shuffled and prevaricated so dismally, that my attorney, taking the proper advantages, overthrew the whole testimony, and procured my discharge.

Lest fresh difficulties should arise, I posted straight to New Lebanon to obtain payment of the note, I yet held, for the horse. The purchaser, meantime, had heard so many reports against my character, that he plumply denied paying a single stiver. On the reverse, he carried me before a justice, who induced me to confess, that the horses sold by Law and myself, as aforesaid, had been previously stolen; upon which the note was given up by my own

consent, and Mr. Justice took both horses into his own possession.

The magistrate had a son, who never possessed, to say no worse, too large a share of common probity. This young man went immediately, to the town of Lenox with two false advertisements, purporting that he himself had lost two horses; at Lenox he found those from whom Law and I had taken the horses first mentioned, and which were now in his father's custody. To those men, therefore, he offered to dispose of his property in the steeds he himself pretended to have lost; assigning as a reason for his wishing to sell, that he was weary of further search. They affirmed, that themselves had met with a similar loss, and of the two, had rather sell than buy. Upon that, the young fellow proffered his silver watch, for their right, at a venture, which, as they had given up all thoughts of recovering their property, they consented to take it. Mr. G. then returned home, exulting, no doubt, in his ingenious artifice. Not long after, the same jockey being so inadvertent as to divulge the trick he had been playing, the right of the matter came to the ears of the men, on whom the cheat had been practiced; they, therefore, purchased a writ against him, by means of which he was compelled to restore the horses, and refund damages; while Law and myself, the original aggressors, escaped without molestation.

At New Lebanon, I purchased a small house, with one acre of land; but, some of my crooked pranks coming to

light, I was compelled to abandon the premises; for which I never obtained a single dollar. At Partridge-town, I made a halt, and the day following was arrested for breaking a Goldsmith's shop; but the prosecutor finding me dauntless, and being himself unable to make suitable proof, relinquished further process.

On this event I determined to quit the state of New York, entirely; my real name beginning to be trumpeted abroad, I was viewed with an eye of suspicion, wherever I set foot. In pursuance of this resolution I came to Poplin, in New Hampshire; here the people suiting my turn to a shaving, I tarried a considerable season.

In this place, I had no lack of employment, my time being devoted to physic, fortune telling and card playing, in which last branch I fancied myself no light proficient. I met, however, with an unlucky rub, one evening; for happening to engage with a gambler of some eminence, he stripped me of both watch and money; this loss gave me uneasiness, till, recollecting a certain goldsmith's shop, I resolved to regret the mischance no longer; remembering the old adage, "light come, light go."

At Poplin, as a palmister and fortune teller, I cut no contemptible figure; the people supposing me deeply skilled in the occult mysteries of fate, and future destinies. Previous inquiries into everybody's reputation, habits and business, was the great talisman, by which I was enabled to relate things, marvelous indeed, in the eyes of superstition and ignorance.

But my chief reliance, for support, was the practice of physic, in which I was thought to have forwarded a number of notable cures; I restored to health, in particular, one woman, affected with an odious disease that she contracted by her familiar intercourse with a certain trader; for which service I was richly rewarded. On the whole, I am at a loss to say, whether, the excess was on the side of my gains or my expenditures while at Poplin. A little before my departure, I spent an agreeable evening with a certain young woman, at a game of cards. After playing some time, we concluded to try a rubber for a night's lodging, and as it happened, she was the winner; on which, I observed that she had worsted me. "Yes, (replied she) but I've as good a right to demand the loosings as yourself." I acknowledged the propriety of her remark and discharged my forfeit, with interest, the same night.

I now left Poplin, but roamed to no great distance, ere I purchased a horse; having this acquisition, I set up for horse jockeying, and made several profitable turns. In the end, however, I was very much cheated, in a gay, sprightly looking horse, that proved, eventually, not only windbroken, but subject to a disorder called the springhalt, which frequently seized his limbs so powerfully, that he would drop down suddenly, as though shot in the head. In short, I found my new purchase no better than a cypher, and therefore resolved to be rid of him at any rate. Next day, meeting a man, who took a fancy to my fine horse, as was, in fact, his general appearance, we

made a swap in which I received thirty dollars in exchange. We parted extremely well suited; but before my chap had ridden twenty rods, his new horse tumbled down, and gave the rider a most desperate fall. I happened to see the same man, not long after, when he threatened me strenuously, with a prosecution, unless I consented to repair his loss. I wisely refused, and afterwards heard no more of the grievance.

Being anxious to see my family, I returned to Lee; but finding it in extreme indigent circumstances, I commenced a routine of pilfering for its relief. My race, however, at this time, was short, for a number of people, owing me an inveterate grudge, on account of former misdemeanors, assembled in a body, and succeeded in making me a prisoner, by surprise. Being captured, I was sent according to military law, under guard, to Exeter, in order to be transmitted to the army. It was in the year 1781, if I mistake not, when this transaction took place.

From Exeter I was removed to Newbury, and locked up in prison, till further orders. Here every device, to effect an escape, was wholly preposterous, since the prisoners for debt invariably betrayed my council; in addition to which I was vigilantly guarded, day and night, by sentries without. After nineteen days' confinement, I was taken out of jail, with ten others, called deserters, and with them, conducted toward West Point, where, at that time, a part of the American troops was quartered. Capt. Dodge had the care and command of the prisoners;

two of whom, Mark White and James Atkins, had deserted from the army, sundry times before; on this account, they were handcuffed first together, and obliged to march in that uneasy condition. Many prophesied, that on their arrival at camp, they would certainly be shot; but it was their wish, and my expectation, to escape, by all means, before we reached that place.

Preparatory to this, I contrived to saw off the iron keys belonging to their handcuffs, and to replace them with leaden ones made of bullets, by which they could disencumber themselves at pleasure.

At Worcester, we halted for the night, and were guarded by an Englishman as sentinel. Finding this man inclinable to desert, as well as the prisoners; I concerted, with him, a plan to spike the small arms, and then to march off, one and all, in a body. The first part of our design was executed successfully, by decent bedtime; but, when on the point of leaving the house, we had the mischance to be betrayed by a camp woman, who belonged to one of the prisoners, and who was unwilling to be forsaken by her partner. This untoward accident disconcerted the whole affair, and obliged us to retract all further thoughts of escape, for the present.

On the following morning, we renewed our march for West Point; but no possible chance of escape intervened, till our arrival at Fishkiln, where it was allotted to take quarters for the night. Several inhabitants of this village being sick, the prisoners were obliged to lodge in a corn

house, at the door of which were posted two negro men, as sentries. It was Dodge's intention to return us into camp in the course of the day following; it seemed therefore necessary to effectuate our escape this evening, if at all.

Among the prisoners was a Frenchman, who could speak English tolerably well, and who, besides, was a very intelligent person. With this man I digested a scheme to break through the side of the corn house, in the dead of night, and then to decamp, with the prisoners, in a body. I engaged, as my part of the duty, to divert the attention of the negroes, our guard, while he, with several others, should pry off a few of the bars or slats. Having fully determined, in what manner to proceed, I took my station, at the outer door; and, when every light in the village had become extinct, introduced myself to the negro guard, by giving them a feigned history of the black people in my own country, whom I extolled as creditable men, and most excellent preachers. These encomiums excited wonderful attention, as I perceived, and were extremely gratifying to my hearers. The better, however, to keep them in play, I arose and having, as the reader must suppose, a tolerable knack at preaching, myself, made them a lengthy harangue, after the manner, as I told them, of their own countrymen; dashing my discourse with the most romantic gestures and expressions, and stamping, with great force, upon the floor, the whole time. This I did to drown the noise

of my accomplices, who were now busily engaged in prying off the slats, which it seemed was a difficult task; because they were not only composed of oak, but were also large, and well spiked to the building. My discourse lasted till the Frenchman had made a sufficient opening; but on this notice, was wound up, by telling the deluded Africans, it had grown late and high time to still the noise of the prisoners, in which sentiment they fully accorded. Bidding my black acquaintance, therefore, good night and returning to the prisoners, I caused each individual quietly to lie down: one hour after which, everything remaining in *propria qua maribus*, we arose, passed out at the breach individually, and paraded in unison under the eves.

The night was obscure and foggy, circumstances propitious to our enterprise. The Frenchman undertook the direction of the whole party;—he instructed us to move off slowly, and to keep a good look out in the rear; for in so dark a night, no danger was apprehended in front. We followed his directions, and marching off in single file, two miles, made a halt; we here agreed to separate for fear of cross accidents. I parted from the rest of the gang, with intent to shape my course for the eastward, conceiving it likely that I could reside there in some tolerable security.

Chapter IX

CANNIBALS AT POUGHKEEPSIE

The buzzing beetle
shall tell a deed
Of dreadful note.

. . . [Dodging the military authorities and stealing an occasional horse, Tufts continues his rambles. He spends six weeks as a physician, in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., and decides to return home.]

The first day's travel, in prosecution of this purpose, brought me to an inn called the Stone Tavern, near which I arrived at the close of the evening. This tavern noted for the misdemeanors of its occupants, who were then utter strangers to me, was situate not many miles from Poughkeepsie. Feeling already somewhat fatigued, and the night being too dark to invite farther progress, I resolved to put up while morning, if I could procure entertainment. Accordingly, I entered the house, and seating myself in a chair, called for some spirit, and was waited upon by a middle-aged woman, who appeared to be the mistress of the inn. Having regaled upon the joys of Bacchus, I desired the landlady to prepare supper, about which she bestirred herself with more than common alacrity. But while this was doing, I was much surprised

at the conduct of the landlord, who as I took notice was extremely busy in securing the outer doors of the house. Thinking there must need be some mystery in this, I looked round, and observed, that all the windows had been strongly fastened previous to my arrival. This discovery increased my perplexity. I imagined that some mischief must be, certainly, in agitation, though what, I could not devise, unless robbery was premeditated.

The only persons, at present in the room, were the landlady, and another woman, whom I concluded to be a guest, as well as myself. Toward this woman, I repeatedly turned my eyes, to see if the traces of fear were discoverable in her countenance; but she betrayed none, appearing quite inattentive to the strange transactions, that were passing in her view, and which had excited, in my breast, such peculiar alarms. Supper, by this time was in great forwardness, but feeling very uneasy, I left my seat, and traversed the room with much anxiety. While I was walking back and forth, I cast my eyes through the opening of a door, that had been left a little ajar, and, to my utter astonishment, discerned, in another apartment, two white men and a negro, loading their guns. I looked about, and saw every avenue by which it was possible to escape securely barricaded; flight, then, imagined I, must be out of the question. In a minute or two more, the landlord came and stood in the entry, with an ax in his hand, and with a countenance, which I thought, wore the marks of evident ferocity. Those extraordinary move-

ments bespake daggers to my soul, and indicated clearly, that not only robbery, but murder also, must be the objects in view. No scruple remained but that the female stranger, above mentioned and myself were the intended victims.

Who is able to paint the awful situation of my mind, the terrors of my imagination at that trying period? How willingly had I parted with everything the most dear, to have been absent from the fatal spot! but the desirable boon was denied me! ! On the contrary, I saw myself encircled with death-dealing friends, [fiends?] four in number, and all armed; with a tigress at their head, to prompt her obsequious troop to the commission of the blackest of deed! !

In vain were the thoughts of escape; no method of extrication was perceptible, unless by cutting a passage through them all. But how can so hazardous an achievement be accomplished, thought I, by the help of my pistols only? What a miserable defense would such weapons make, when opposed to four men, armed with guns and axes?

The enterprise was too arduous, too desperate for my feeble undertaking; its execution quite impossible! ! !

Such were my fears, and such my reflections. On the whole, I saw no possibility of eluding their infernal grasp; therefore, deemed it the height of madness to exasperate them, by premature attempts of my own, which could but hasten the fatal moment. Ideas of this sort crowded my

imagination, and determined me to wait the issue of the horrid scene in silence; to abide the dreaded event without the smallest exertion, till the last fearful extremity should render it indispensable!

I therefore, resumed my chair, and waited with seeming composure till supper was laid on the tapis, when the landlady, whose visage pronounced her the worst of the whole club, invited me to the table. I complied, not well knowing what else to do; but such, at that moment, was my perturbation, that not a morsel could I have eaten, to have gained a princely diadem! The Bacchanalian may revel in his cups, the Epicure delight in his nicest dainties; but, to a man in my predicament, even nectar and embrosia must have lost their attractive charms.

The woman, who was a guest, and, as I supposed, in the same perilous situation with myself, sat in company with me at supper, and began to help herself, as I took notice, in the most unconcerned manner. Our viands were cold meat, and had an appearance, so extremely odd, as to impress me with a belief, (nor was I out in my conjectures) that they were human flesh, I sat, therefore, in silent astonishment, viewing the horrid banquet, but without attempting to swallow a single mouthful.

The hag of a hostess, observing my remissness, demanded if the food was disagreeable; and, on my hesitating in reply, she took it away, and presented another dish, which I knew to be cold beef; but, for my life, I could not

taste of it, expecting as I did, to be shot, or knocked on the head, every instant.

While those formalities were passing at the table, I had been alarmed once or twice by noises, issuing from the adjacent rooms; though, as yet, no one of the monsters, I dreaded, had offered to approach. I was nevertheless in momentary expectation of a visit from one or all of them, as the landlord yet maintained his post in the entry.

My stupid, female associate was still eating, with fancied security; but to awaken her to a sense of the danger, I trod softly upon her toe. She resented my freedom, as she termed it, with much asperity, and grew so frantic with passion, as made me shudder, lest fatal consequences should be accelerated by her clamors. In order to pacify her I made the handsomest apologies I could, attributing my offense to mere inadvertency, which I hoped her lenity would vouchsafe to pardon. Soothed by these concessions, her resentment subsided and she resumed anon, what seemed to be her favorite employment, eating. At this moment, I heard people in the other rooms, passing very briskly to and fro; at the sound of whose footsteps my apprehensions were wrought up to the highest pitch of fearful expectation; insomuch that I hastily left the table, and crossed the room to a window facing the street.

At this eventful crisis, when hope had taken its flight; I heard, at a distance in the road, several people talking quite loudly. I had good hopes they might be drawing

toward the house, as I had heard no footsteps pass by, as yet. So unexpected, yet so fortunate an occurrence, as that Christian people, should be approaching, at the juncture I had resigned myself entirely for lost, revived my sunken spirits, in a twinkling; and lest they should omit calling, I resolved, without a moment's delay, to make one effort toward my deliverance. With this intent, I stepped up to the landlady, who yet continued in the room, and addressed her in the following strain, it being the offspring of my immediate invention. "Madam, I had like to have forgotten my errand; I was requested by a sergeant with seven or eight men, whom I left drinking a mile back, to desire you to prepare them supper immediately. They wish not to be detained, as they are in quest of a deserter, whom they have tracked this way, and are resolved to have dead or alive, before morning." The woman, hearing this, requested to know how soon I expected them.

"Every minute, madam, (returned I) indeed, I heard them coming just now." "Did you so, said she, then its time to be stirring." With that she ran as far as the door, leading to the next room, and cried out to her myrmidons, "What are you about there; who, the plague, fastened up the doors? What's the reason you are not down cellar about your business? Husband! you must help me provide supper for seven or eight men! ! ! This incongruous, but sudden harangue gave them all, I believe a rude shock; for the doors were set open instantly,

and several men hurried down cellar, I knew not for what purpose. No sooner was a passage cleared, than I leaped out of the house, and looking toward the road, espied a traveler, then passing by, I called out to know if my people were coming along soon. "Yes, said he, a number of soldiers are just at hand. They will be here directly." I thought this a fortunate circumstance, for I feared lest nobody had been near, when I told the landlady to that purpose. But now thinking myself pretty secure and wishing to terrify the wretches, who had used one so villainously, especially the landlady, whom I took to be a she Devil, I drew out one of my pistols, and told her, as she was sitting in the entry way, where now she had posted herself, that I was armed as well as her own crew, and would know, before quitting the spot, their motives for barring up the doors. As she made no return to this, I told her it was manifest, they had meant murder by that stratagem. She attempted to apologize, but I swore by Jupiter, that on arrival of my comrades, who were hard by, they should all pay dear for their villainy; and that she herself, as being the ringleader, should fall the first victim. At these menaces she was vastly agitated, and had much ado to support herself in the chair, while the sight of her distress afforded pleasure to my heart.

Thus, having given the wicked woman a sufficient alarm, and not caring to wait longer, I ran out to the road, where spying no soldiers near, I made off, the homeward way, with all the dispatch imaginable.

I had gotten from the Stone Tavern, perhaps half a mile, when suddenly a man sprung up from the wayside, just in front of me. It was so dark a night I could not distinguish whether he was armed or not; but having met with such a late, severe shock, the sight of this unexpected guest gave me another uncommon surprise. The first thought which occurred was, that he probably belonged to the Stone Tavern, and had come thus far on purpose to way-lay me. I therefore instantly drew out my pistol, told him I was armed at all points, and bid him approach nearer at his peril, swearing I would blow him into ribbands in a breath, if he advanced one inch further. At these threats he was dismally affrighted, and began to retreat, protesting he meant no harm, in the least, for he was a laboring man, and had been out that day swingling flax. I bid him keep distance, as he valued his safety, for I had been startled too much that evening to stand upon ceremony with anybody. The stranger waited not for further remonstrances, but wheeling about, took to his heels, with the utmost precipitancy, crying out, as he sped away, "if you have been frightened, I suppose it must be at the stone tavern."

After this flurry, I continued plodding on, till late in the evening, when, drawing near a house, as yet illuminated, I went in, and tarried the remainder of the night. The next day I questioned my host respecting the people of the stone tavern, and was informed of their being tories,

receiving otherwise a very black description of their ill behavior.

Before resumption of my journey, news arrived, that the same vile miscreants had taken advantage of the evening gloom, and had decamped, bag and baggage, with intention, as was thought, of joining the British on Long Island. That sundry people, hearing of their elopement, had searched the stone house and cellar, that same morning, and had seen appearances indicative of the recent murder of a number of persons.

On comparison of circumstances, there could be no doubt, but their sudden flight was attributable to the alarm I had given them, and my blood ran cold to think how narrowly I had escaped death by the hands of bloody assassins. The female guest, whom I mentioned as having been my companion, at that house, was reported no where to have been found afterwards; so that little question remained, but that, she had fallen a sacrific to the barbarity of its inmates. . . .

[Tufts returns to Lee, and is greeted with joy by his wife and numerous children. He lives in honest industry for the space of four months. Then disaster befalls him.]

I chanced, one day, to meet with a man at Newmarket, named Durell; somehow or other a difference arising between us, on matters of trivial import, the hotspur of a blade, without previous notice, gave me so heavy a blow, that I fell quite senseless to the floor. Soon as I recovered

life and motion, I arose, and demanded who struck me; for, a company being present I did not know the aggressor. Durell made answer, with a terrible oath, that he was the man. I challenged him to see me to the door; where, a ring being formed, a most severe combat ensued. But my abusive antagonist, however, soon sunk beneath the fury of my blows; and being taken up by the spectators, was carried into Folsom's tavern, where he remained in a dangerous situation for a fortnight. I was in much perplexity for fear of his death; and, therefore, kept snugly concealed, and in preparation to flee at a moment's warning; but, at last, much to my joy and satisfaction, he recovered.

Soon after this I met, by accident, with several fellows, among whom was one who owed me an unmerciful grudge; but, to prevent future mischief, I shall not mention his name. This man, wishing to requite me for former supposed injuries, assaulted me, without mercy; and being seconded by the rest of his party, they altogether gave me a most intolerable beating. As this abuse had been unprovoked, on my side, I was fully determined on revenge. Meeting, the same villain therefore, alone, a short time after, we pitched battle; fortune declared in my favor, and he received his deserts; for this he has owed me, without doubt, an ill turn ever since. Sundry other cross accidents supervening, at this epoch, it became as plain as a pike staff, that a train of consequences must ensue. Being thus oppressed with fearful apprehen-

sions, I thought best to abandon Lee for the present; so, bidding adieu to my kindred, I set off, in proper haste, for the eastern territories.

Destitute of a single shilling, in the world, it was requisite to levy contributions on the public, so that I might elude, "haggard poverty's cruel gripe." In some places, therefore, I practiced physic; in others told fortunes, and in others again, I discharged the sacerdotal office. I could turn my hand with equal facility to either of those scientific branches, and acquired some celebrity in them all. In the business of fortune telling, I prophesied with the acumen of a sybil; obtaining, thereby, the appellation of a Salem wizard. That the rabble should believe this, was much to my advantage, as every craft exists on the strength of public opinion. However I had not the hardiesse to undertake the sacred functions, except where unknown. My good fortune, however, was such, that, whether I held forth in public assemblies, or in private families, I generally received the approbation of my auditors, many of whom thought me a saint, and worthy of canonization.

I made a long abode in the eastern department, and kept in fact, so many strings to my bow, that for the most part, I fared sumptuously, and even replenished my purse, which had of late been in a galloping consumption.

Toward the close of this tour, I recollect, among other particulars, of my attending at a certain religious afternoon meeting. Here, when the minister had finished his

last prayer, I addressed the people, by way of exhortation; my discourse had the desired effect; the whole audience was very deeply impressed; but the deacon, beyond the rest, was so extremely gratified, that following me into the street, he would take no refusal, to his invitation to accompany him to the parson's house; to gratify the old zealt, [zealot] I complied and found, assembled, a number of people, among whom was a justice of the peace. I had an invitation to tarry all night, which I accepted; but, previously to the separation of the company, it was urged upon me to make the evening prayer. Although they used great importunity, particularly the deacon, who would brook no denial, I still declined. At last, however, to please my new friends, and support the ghostly character, with propriety, I conceded, and made a prayer, highly relished indeed, by every hearer, but more especially by the deacon, who was so elevated, that he expressed his admiration in the warmest terms. After this I was much caressed, while I tarried in the neighborhood; soon leaving the place, however, I set my face towards Lee, and arrived thither in health and safety. . . .

At last my old confederate, Ebenezer Hubbard, coming to Lee, we agreed to set out in Co. and try our luck at theft, as heretofore; this determination was made, I think, in the year 1785.

We traveled westerly, drawing but few prizes from fortune's wheel, till we advanced as far as Number four; here, we succeeded in stealing a couple of horses. We fled

precipitately with the booty to Amherst, where thinking ourselves out of danger, we took lodgings, and gave a loose to every indulgence. Judge then of our surprise and chagrin, when bounce into our apartment, came the owners of the stolen horses, with a sheriff at their heels, who made us both prisoners. On consultation it was deemed advisable to carry us back to Number four; but, when ready to embark, a trifling altercation took place respecting the horses. Finally, it was judged unsafe, that I should be trusted with the horse I had stolen, I must mount, therefore, another, their late purchase. This important business adjusted, we began the procession, myself and Hubbard in the center; but had gone very few furlongs, ere I imagined that the horse assigned to my share was decidedly the fleetest in the whole troop. Having handled so many, I thought myself a competent judge; therefore, intended, at all hazards, to outride my keepers, before our arrival at the place of destination.

A few miles short of Number four was a level plain, four miles across. Coming to this place, I hardly supposed we should find a more convenient spot, in which to try our dexterity, at horsemanship. Accordingly I stepped my nag into the van, and, Jehu like, set out, full tilt; the guard pursuing with much heroism; but seeing me gain ground every instant, they made a huge outcry for my halting. I turned a deaf ear, and before I was over the plain, had run my tardy followers quite out of sight. This achieved, I wheeled behind a sconce of bushes, aloof

from the road, and no sooner had the troopers shot by, than I gave once more full reins to my steed, and thus got off, with flying colors, to Pepperel in Massachusetts. Here I turned my horse to good account, and with the avails repaired to Lee; to which place, in spite of the numerous perils and indignities I had suffered there, I still felt a powerful attachment. I soon learned the fate of Hubbard; he was escorted back to Number four, but, after a short detention, was generously dismissed by the captors.

Soon after this, from one of my good neighbors, (who, in all conscience should be nameless) I took a valuable horse, rode him to Rockingham, in Vermont, and sold him for about fifty-one dollars. On my return back, the injured man upbraided me with his loss. But, on his promising to take no advantage, I confessed the "foul fact," and agreed to attend him to Rockingham, in order to show him the horse, he becoming sponsor for expenses on the path. The next morning, we set out on foot, and in four days, traveled to Rockingham, one hundred and twenty miles. After taking all these pains, my neighbor's horse was, unfortunately, not to be found, having been sold, and carried off, no one could tell whither. This was a blank joke to the worthy man, who was loath to return home without accomplishing his errand. I told him, that seeing we were thus baulked, it could be no harm, in compensation of his misfortune, to take another horse; he considered this a dangerous expedient; in fact, he hardly knew what to think of it, although he was clear

he ought to be made whole in some shape or other. However, at Number four, we made bold, as a single animal is lonesome, to take a horse each, the one from John Marsh, and the other from Capt. Weatherby. We proceeded with our acquisition to Amherst, eighty miles, where my partner, supposing himself out of harm's way, proposed our alighting at a tavern; but, while we were tippling very bountifully, in came Marsh with a sheriff, (one Grout) who, very courteously conducted us back to Number four. Here a court was called, consisting of two justices, and our sentence was to pay about three hundred dollars, which fell entirely on my partner to discharge. This was not all; we were ordered likewise to receive thirty lashes apiece, which, I found, were to be inflicted with a cat o' nine tails. I received my share first; when in consideration that I had led my accomplice into this abominable scrape, I offered repeatedly, to take his share of the punishment, also. But this being disallowed by the court, my honest partner was himself triced up. Never, I protest, did I see a man so unmercifully scared in my life. After receiving the flagellation, however, and giving proper security for the payment of damages, we were dismissed, and suffered to return home, though indeed, with sore hides, the result of so *cutting* a calamity. My concern was, in truth, far greater for my fellow sufferer, than myself; not only because he had the whole money to advance, but, because my mischievous counsel and behavior had caused his deplorable misfortune.

Nothing memorable befell me, after this, till the winter ensuing, when the store of Mr. Jacob Sheafe, of Portsmouth, was broken open, and robbed of goods and money to some amount. One Jones informed, that he saw me conveying a large bundle through Portsmouth streets, that same night. This was enough to fix a suspicion upon me. An officer was therefore dispatched, who seized and conveyed me to Portsmouth, where the superior court was then in session. Jones swore as above, which caused an order for my confinement in Exeter jail. I was not a little discomposed at this treatment, because I knew myself to be perfectly innocent of the charge. However, as good luck would have it, some days after, my accuser, Jones, being snugly observed, a part of the stolen goods were found in his keeping; in consequence of which he was taken up, and whipped, while I was liberated, and reimbursed by Mr. Sheafe, after the rate of one dollar per day.

The same winter, the store of Mr. Eliphalet Smith, of Newmarket, being opened and plundered of a parcel of goods. I was arrested on suspicion, as in the case of Mr. Sheafe, and lodged without other inquiry, in Exeter jail. I had been in custody about a week, when the real thief was detected, with sundry of the articles in his possession; this served as a clear manifestation of my innocence, and as the medium of my speedy enlargement.

BOOK III

Chapter I

DEAR NABBY

Bright Venus, in her rosy car,
Invites to scenes of harmless war,
Young Cupid lends desire;
Sweet scenes, which tho' they stop my breath,
Cause but a momentary death,
And fans the lover's fire.

BEING once more in possession of liberty, while of too restless a temper to enjoy its comforts, in domestic repose, I set out in quest of new scenes, and new adventures. Not long had I paced the varied amphitheater of life, ere chance directed my steps to Greenland.

Whether my good or evil genius conducted me thither, at this season, is a problem I cannot even now resolve. Whether I ought to felicitate myself on what befell me there; or, to deplore the consequent events, are mysteries, alike, too deep for my investigation. It so happened that I there saw, and conversed, for the first time, with a young woman whose name was Abigail Kennison, who resided with one William Foss, of that town. Though a widow she was both young and beautiful; her manners soft and engaging, and her personal charms uncommonly attractive; such, at least, did she appear, at that period, in my, perhaps, too partial view. On further acquaintance, find-

ing her disposition amiable, I did not hesitate to pay her my devoirs, as a lover; during which, being quite a stranger to her and the family, I palmed myself upon both, under the fictitious name of Gideon Garland. Once a week, for three months, I visited, privately, this alluring object of my vows, at the end of which term she unfortunately proved to be pregnant. Having a knowledge of her situation, I grew timorous of consequences, and discontinued my customary visits; though, to conceal nothing, my feelings were greatly wounded by that restraint. My inclination plead strongly in her behalf; for she had in fact, bewitched my fancy, and riveted my affection, in a manner, which no other woman had hitherto been able.

For two long months, from my unmanly dereliction, she waited in patient expectation of my return, without seeking the means of redress; by that time, however, she had discovered my real name, and besides, that I was already married, and had a large family. Upon this unpleasing discovery, she went before a magistrate, and, legally charged me, on oath, with being the father of the child of which she was then pregnant. She then advertised me by letter, that seeing restitution by marriage was out of the question, if I would meet her in Stratham, the place of her former abode, at a time she particularized, the affair should be there settled in almost any manner, I might choose. Accordingly, I sent her word, that I should not fail of attendance in obedience to her summons, and in this I was punctual; but found, to my surprise, that her

honorable proposals terminated in her having an officer who seized me, the moment I entered the house. This treacherous proceeding, as I certainly conceived it, did not a little ruffle my spirits. I had anticipated, no such treatment, and was, therefore, quite unprepared for defense. In a few minutes the officer, in accents of abuse and irritation, requested an explicit declaration of my intentions. "You appear to be extremely knowing folks in business, said I; how indeed am I to settle this?" By paying the money, undoubtedly; or, if you prefer it, by going to jail, replied the officer. "I choose to go to jail, then, and you shall find out whether you have a fool to deal with or not." Having uttered this, I was taken, first, before a magistrate, and then as a legal consequence, carried to Exeter jail, where, as the keeper was seeing me properly disposed of, I jocosely said, "I have come to pay you another visit, Capt. Ladd; but not in a criminal capacity, therefore you cannot put me in irons, this time." Here, however, I stretched the truth. "Yes I can, exclaimed he." "We'll try your hand at it" repeated I. At this he gave vent to several reproaches; but, after blustering awhile, thrust me into the best jail.

Being thus confined, my mind was busily exercised in trying to devise ways and means to avoid paying for a child, which, nevertheless, I thought really my own. Though I really entertained a passion, however criminal, for the poor girl; yet I resented the rough treatment, I had lately received at her instigation; and resolved, how

well soever I had deserved that treatment in fact, to lay a plan, to requite the transaction. Many were my serious reflections, on this knottiest of subjects; but still the proper measures to be pursued did not so readily occur. At last however, I conceived, that, in case, I could bring the girl to settle, and take my security, while in prison, I should, in no wise, be compellable to discharge the security (in which, perhaps, I calculated without my host) or, if no other advantage accrued, I should obtain, at least, the privilege of absconding, which might serve my turn altogether as well. I concluded, therefore, to send her a letter, the first opportunity, with an offer of settlement either with herself or friends. But, as it happened, I was fortunately saved this trouble, for on the third day of my imprisonment, two of the Selectmen of Stratham made me a visit, as well in behalf of the complainant, as of the town itself. After a few cursory observations, it was asked, what I allotted to do in relation to my imprisonment. "Have you authority to settle, demanded I, "Yes, our power is sufficient, as may appear by these papers." Accordingly, knowing I had a horse in Exeter, and supposing, perhaps, I might own other property, they offered to discharge me on my giving an obligation for forty pounds, lawful money. I acceded to this, and the jail doors being opened, they introduced a table, paper and ink, to conclude the business; but while this was transacting, the gates were closed upon us all. A note of hand was then written for forty pounds, which I signed; and they, on their side, gave me an acquittance against all further de-

mands. This done, the doors were again set open, and I was informed, that I was at liberty to depart, when I saw fit. I marched out with the rest, and was ushered into the sitting room, to talk the affair over, further; and in the meantime, to share, in their honorable company, a bowl or two of grog; a matter of course on these occasions. As we sat drinking and chatting over the liquor, I said to them, in a rallying way, "Now that the business is so far compromised, who shall pay for this bye-blow, you or I." "Who but yourself?" cried they. "Not so, Gentlemen, by your leave, retorted I; for, let me tell you, a prisoner's obligation is irrecoverable in law, and consequently void." "Think you as much (quoth one of them) by my troth, I will have that question decided in a few minutes." Without addition of a syllable more, he suddenly left the house, with his colleague, and away they hied to confer with a certain gentleman of the profession, residing at Exeter. Having stated facts, shown my obligation and requested his opinion, they received, for their consolation, as they themselves acknowledged, a repetition of the doctrine, that I had so lately thundered in their ears. The obligation, he assured them, was invalid for that, I might plead duresse, at the time of making it, in abatement of any action they could bring; so that, on the whole, he advised their compromising with the complainant, poor Nabby, in the best manner possible.

With this unpleasing answer they posted back to the prison, not a little chagrined at having overshot themselves thus, but finding it too late to mend a bad bargain,

they concluded to let it remain as it was, so mounted their nags, and set out for the town of Stratham. How the difficulty was adjusted with Nabby, I do not remember to have made inquiry.

Directly upon their departure, I called for my horse, discharged the bill of keeping, and returned to my family, feeling no small exultation, at the kind issue of an affair, which in the outset seemed to threaten me with long imprisonment and great perplexity.

Scarcely had three days elapsed, before curiosity enticed me to revisit the comely Abigail, though I still felt a degree of indignation at my late rough usage. I was desirous of an interview, to learn the drift of her late conduct; and to see in what manner she stood affected at the fruitless termination of her process. I knew not but this might be the last visit she would ever receive from me.

When I entered her presence, I found her absorbed in tears, and apparently in much trouble and affliction. I was both surprised and softened, at the sight of her distress. No sooner did poignancy of grief permit utterance, than she gave vent to her complaints in strains the most pathetic; a faint specimen of which follows.

"Unfeeling man, (exclaimed she) your cruelty has undone me; my peace and happiness are destroyed, forever! Why, to compass my ruin, did you conceal your present marriage, your real situation in life? Why betray me with false promises, not in your power to perform? Had

I been apprised of your conjugal connections, nothing could have bribed my consent to the lewd intercourse we have been guilty of, nor should temptations have allured me from the path of virtue and decency! But now, alas! the fatal die is cast; my wretchedness is complete and remediless; my reputation blasted forever, and destitute am I left of all earthly comfort. . . ."

Here sighs and tears, intervening, obstructed her broken accents, and she was silent. The sight of her misery gave my heart a sympathetic pang, and sighs of compassion escaped from my swollen bosom. At that moment, I had made with cheerfulness, any sacrifice, however painful or great, to have lessened her distresses, or contributed to her peace of mind.

"Calm those fears, and cease those unavailing complaints, I beseech you, (cried I, taking her fondly by the hand) and believe me at all times your devoted friend. Believe me yet inclined, notwithstanding the trivial circumstance that has obstructed our harmony, to render you every assistance in my power. My heart is not formed of such obdurate materials, as to be insensible to your misfortunes, nor has my former love sustained the smallest diminution. On the contrary, most joyfully would I remove, to the extent of my abilities, all anxiety from your breast; most gladly, contribute to the advancement of your felicity.* . . . "

* This preposterous conversation has been cut by about one-half. Of course, the author was merely trying his hand in the style of 18th Century romances. —*E.P.*

Having thus disclosed our thoughts to each other, we made a firm and faithful agreement to flee away, in concert, to some sequestered spot, far from the reach of those who might be able to molest us, or should be opposed to our union. However, as cold weather was just at the door, we thought fit to postpone departure, till the spring ensuing.

In this way did we adjust all former grievances, and heal every subject of uneasiness. And now, that the storm of her passions had subsided, her mind grew calmer by degrees, till at length it recovered its accustomed serenity; this was an event which brought pleasure to my heart. . . .

Parting from the woman of my heart, I returned home, full of the thoughts of my novel resolution, but anxious, at the same time, to keep the whole affair a profound secret, till I could carry it into complete execution. Meanwhile I paid my mistress a number of visits, through the course of the winter, and made all suitable provision for her approaching illness. If I happened to move the subject of our intended departure, a momentary dejection would sadden her countenance, and some expression of reluctance escape from her lips. Her scruples were of the conscientious kind, as she appeared to be apprehensive, that my family would be injured by our elopement.

In the course of the winter I made a tour to Fairfield, a town lying northwardly of Pigwacket, and as land was cheap in that quarter, I pitched upon it as the place of our

future retirement, should my paramour be disposed to attend me thither.

With design to know her mind more fully on that important question, I paid her a visit early in the spring, found her in health, and was presented with the first pledge of our mutual love. No sooner had we retired, than I addressed her, to the following effect. "My dear Nabby! I have now come, on the wings of love and impatience, to visit you for the last time, as I trust, ere we shall bid adieu to these unkindly shores. I have presumed to call you mine, and it is a privilege I claim by all the ties of love and tenderness. The object of my present visit is to converse with you, the real mistress of my heart, and to know your mind more fully on the subject of our intended expedition. In a few days, if I meet with no obstruction on your side (which heaven forbid) I shall be in preparation for the commencement of our journey. I have considered that it may be best to repair to the town of Fairfield, because I have friends in that place, who are ready to receive us; there we may reside, unexposed to the shafts of the busy and revengeful. May I flatter myself with no demur on your part, or must I feel the pangs of disappointment, in a matter so near my heart?" . . .

[The rest of their high-flown talk is omitted.]

Thus having arranged with the delight of my eyes, our whole plan of procedure; I hasten to mention, that the next morning I returned home, and, with all due secrecy,

made the necessary preparations for departure. Within the time, prefixed, I was at her habitation in Stratham, with my horse and a cart and wheels, for, in conscience, I could not dignify my homely vehicle with the appellation of chaise. She was soon ready with her baggage, and we set off conjointly, she in the cart, but myself on foot, in the capacity of driver.

I passed with the carriage through Lee, to take in a few articles, as yet there, in the hands of a trustee; this, however, was a miscalculation, for, of necessity, I must now pass near my own house. My wife, too, had gained some inkling of our meditated elopement; wherefore, being much irritated, she flew out of doors in a paroxysm of passion, and exclaimed with much volubility, "I have often heard of hell upon trucks, but never had a sight of it before now." To this most righteous invective I made no reply, but, leaving her in the height of her philippics, drove onward with great velocity, till quite out of sight and hearing of the family.

The distance from Stratham to Fairfield is one hundred and thirty miles, and it was our intention to remove thither, without useless loitering upon the passage. While this lengthy migration was performing, fortune bequeathed not a single indignant frown, nor played us one antic trick; on the reverse, our whole tour was but a scene of varied recreation. We proceeded by slow and easy stages, and received, from every quarter, the kindest hospitality on the road. Two whole weeks were consumed

in this journey; but at last we had the satisfaction to reach the desired harbor, in prime spirits, and to put up at the house of Joseph Jackson, whom I regarded as a peculiar friend.

As Fairfield was at that period but thinly inhabited, the best land was obtainable, on very moderate conditions. Hard by my place of residence, was a tract, containing one hundred and seventy acres, for sale, of a superior quality. As I intended to settle in this quarter, I disposed of my horse, and every other article I could spare, and purchased that valuable tract. After which acquisition, I made no useless delays, but proceeded heartily to work, at felling trees and clearing land. In this business I made so rapid a progress, that my neighbors assured me I should soon have a good farm. My prospects continuing to brighten, I built a house, resolving to sit down contentedly for life, and bid adieu to roving forever.

With my new companion, whose mental endowments were excellent, and whose disposition was extremely agreeable, I now lived in love and harmony, enjoying more real quiet, than I had seen for many years before. Each day added to the flattering probability, that Fairfield was to become the requiem of my toils. I saw nothing now to blight my hopes or disturb my tranquillity, except the fears I yet harbored, lest haply I might lose my land by prosecutions for former miscarriages. To remedy this imaginary evil, I laid a plan to save my purchase, by con-

veying it, through the medium of a deed, to Jackson, my near neighbor, and, as I then supposed, firm friend.

I conferred with him, on the subject, told him my apprehensions, and the resolution I had formed of putting my land, for safety, into his hands, as into those of a friend, in whom I could repose unlimited confidence. He approved of the calculation, and promised to be faithful in whatever trust I might choose to invest him. Accordingly, without further reflection, and even without exacting counter security, I gave him a good deed of my whole land, which he was to reconvey to me at an hour's warning.

After this transaction, having a mixture of concerns to adjust, at Lee, and Newmarket, the place of my nativity, I made an excursion to those parts, and there collected a number of small debts, which had been a long time due. After this, I negotiated sundry other important matters, and bade farewell to all my friends, not expecting to revisit them for some time to come.

Departing hence I made the best of my way homeward, till, on the path, I met with a vagabond Frenchman, who persuaded me to help him steal a brace of fat sheep. Just as we had dressed them, the owner caught us in the fact, and obliged us to refund two other live sheep, and pay him exemplary damages: This scandalous piece of business impeded my journey for several days.

But another mishap, far more grievous than the one just related, befell me at this juncture; for I must here

relate, that while I was absent from Fairfield, a man, called Squire Dow, went to that town with a pretended sheriff named Allen, in quest (as he said) of a horse, stolen by Henry Tufts, from Dow's father. In searching for my property, he heard of the conveyance I had made of my land, therefore, went and requested Jackson to give him a quit claim, bidding seventy-five dollars, by way of inducement; but threatening to drag him to jail, in event of his non-compliance. Jackson, disliking the requisition, persisted in refusal one whole day; but, being ignorant of the affairs of law, he, at last, was so far intimidated and wrought upon by Dow's threats and persuasions together, that he gave him a deed of my whole land, for which he received seventy-five dollars, the gratuity promised.

Dow's greediness was far from being satiated by this acquest; for he next repaired, with his engine of iniquity, Allen, to my dwelling-house, where those remorseless knaves, in spite of all my housekeeper could say, or do, to the contrary, pillaged it of every valuable article; and, without legal authority, sold the whole at vendue, in which they were assisted by one Jesse Barker, who bought a part of the goods.

Dow was now about to decamp; but the people of Fairfield, supposing I should hear of the catastrophe, and not return; insisted on Dow's conveying my housewife to Stratham, her former residence, or, at least, some part of the way thither. To satisfy their murmurs he consented,

though reluctantly, and set out with her for Conway, in Pigwacket; between which town and Fairfield there was then a large tract of woods, twenty-four miles in length, without a single inhabitant. As it happened the way was rough, and our travelers so belated, that encamp they must, all night, in the wilderness. Having whiled away the sleepless hours till morning dawn, Dow, with some others arose from the dewy couch, and renewed his journey; leaving Allen, who was unready to start, to conduct Abigail to Conway. As the gentleman last named (if the appellation, when applied to him, be not a profanition of terms) had a few amorous ingredients in his composition, he showed a vehement inclination, before resuming his journey, to dance Sallanger's round* with his tempting charge, seeing he had her alone in the bushes. Each art was tried, and every method attempted to win her consent, but she as constantly resisted his advances. At last, finding her inexorable, and that bribes and entreaties were alike fruitless, he grew outrageous, and drawing out his knife, swore he would finish her on the spot, if she obstructed the gratification of his wishes. Unmoved by these menaces, she was virtuously steadfast in her refusal, till Allen, whose ardor knew no bounds, caught hold of his intended prey, and endeavored by main force, to rifle those charms, which he despaired of tasting by

* Farmer and Henley, in *Slang and its Analogues*, trace this circumlocution to *"Sallenger's Round,*—a loose ballad and tune *tempus* Elizabeth."—*E.P.*

other methods. His female opponent made the best possible resistance, and in the long struggle, received upon her fair bosom two cuts from Allen's knife. The scene was horrid in the extreme, but the hasty ravisher, struck at the sight of blood, as it issued amain from the wounds he had inflicted, and thinking too, that her fortress of virtue was impregnable, desisted from his ungodly undertaking. Allen, however, was much chagrined at the mortifying rebuff, while the injured fair, her spirits ruffled, and strength exhausted, sat down at a distance. Tears fell from her eyes, but, after the respite of a minute of two, she arose to take the horse, wishing to abandon the detested spot. Allen prevented her, swearing he would leave her to perish in the wilderness, as a punishment for her obstinacy. She was vastly agitated, insomuch that the ruffian was afraid to execute his menaces, and finally, gave her the horse while he went on foot, in which order they advanced to Conway.

She applied immediately, to the next Magistrate, complained of Allen's violence, and took out a warrant against him. A number of men turned out to assist in taking the culprit, but did not overtake him, till he had reached Eaton, where they found him at a grist-mill, waiting while his horse should champ a feed of corn. A sharp conflict ensued. Allen defended himself resolutely with his knife, and cut the hand of the foremost assailant, then darting through the midst of them, he made off, like a sturdy fellow, toward the thickets. The wounded man, pur-

sued, with a cudgel, overtook and knocked Allen down, swearing he should surrender or die. Others running up to the combatants, Allen was secured, and, presently after, conducted to the main road in Eaton.

Here I met them on my passage from Newmarket. Dow, observing me, stepped up with two of his myrmidons, saying, "I will secure you." Accordingly, they took me prisoner, and hurried me away into the woods; it being their drift to prevent my yielding succor to my mistress, or being present at Allen's examination and trial. In this manner was I harassed and bamboozled, by those insidious knaves. Meantime, my faithful female, indignant at such treatment, like a true amazon, mustered seven or eight men, and placing herself at their head, sallied out for my rescue. Dow, at sight of those people, drew out a pistol, and presenting it to my breast, swore he would blow me through, if I moved a single step. My blood boiled at the tyrannical mandate, yet prudence restrained me, till my rescuers should have gotten within shot; but no sooner did this happen, than, by a sudden coup de main, I knocked the pistol from Dow's hand, and hurled it toward my friends. The heroic Nabby seized the pistol, and advancing toward Dow, (virago like) protested she would shoot him with his own weapon, if he did not instantly set me free. Dow refused, declaring I was his prisoner, and threatening, with the utmost severity of the law, his annoyers, should they attempt the smallest interference. At this moment

one of the company running up, smote Dow upon the back of his hand with a fusee, and fractured three of the bones; this was a decisive blow, and put an end to the contest.

Having regained my liberty, we were preparing to set off for the Justice's house, with a view to be present at Allen's trial; but we had not proceeded ten rods, ere obliged to halt on Dow's account, whose hand grew so painful, he could proceed no further. I undertook the office of surgeon, seeing no other was near, and replaced the bones, in the best order possible, binding up the wound with a linen handkerchief. This done, we all repaired to Captain Wood's, in Eaton, where we found Allen in custody.

Here my companion gave me a particular detail of the mischief perpetrated by Dow and Allen, in their stripping me of all the property I possessed on the face of the globe, and of the shocking treatment that she herself had particularly sustained from the hands of Allen. Had I ever rendered my despoilers any injury, had I given them cause of complaint, I could now have borne, less indignantly, their nefarious conduct; but such was not the case, for in truth, I never was principal or accessary in stealing horse or other property from Dow or his father, during my existence. At the diabolical devices, then, of Dow and Allen, I felt the utmost indignation, and threatened both with plenary vengeance, the moment I should be at liberty to take them to task. Allen could expect no

lenity by reason of his atrocious attack upon Nabby, he was, therefore, quite anxious to compromise that part of the tragedy. To this end, he made us sundry proposals; but, at last, offered his horse, saddle and bridle, which, after some consultation, we accepted, and gave him a discharge in full.

This being settled, we went forward to Fairfield, to look after the wreck of our affairs there, and to visit Jackson, who had betrayed, so preposterously, my ill-placed confidence. I wished, among other things, to be thoroughly satisfied, whether he had really intended roguery, or not. On meeting, I reproached him with his venality, his perfidy, in bartering away my land for a song, miserably sung; demanded the seventy-five dollars he had received of Dow, and intimated my expectation of further reimbursements; but, to my great surprise, he refused paying even the paltry sum I demanded. The case was, by no means, even dubious; no remedy, beyond expostulation, was left me, for I had neglected counter security, when I gave him the deed. In a word, as my ill fortune would have it, I finally lost my land, and got nothing therefor, it being a clear case, that my credit was at too low an ebb at court, to undertake the prosecution of Jackson or Dow.

However, as my companion in sadness was legal owner of all the goods sold at vendue, she brought an action against Jesse Barker, for taking them from her house, and it justly cost him a good horse to compromise the

affair. I must also take notice, that a short time after this, Dow disposed of my [land?] for five hundred dollars, and that, in fact, it has mortified my feelings, even to this day, to see into how excellent a farm it has been made.

Very possibly (do I sometimes exclaim) might that farm have yet continued my own, but for the folly and treachery of a pretended friend. O! truth, probity, justice! were you visible to mortal eyes, how captivating would be your charms! On the contrary, what a frightful figure do fraud, fallacy and deception compose! The poet and philosopher have exerted their ablest powers in eulogy of the former, and in showing the horrid nature of the latter! those are, indeed, the props and ornaments of society; these, the plagues and curses of human life! !

Chapter II

"GADDING ABOUT QUACK-LIKE"

Accepto, cladvenda est janua, damno,
When the steed is stolen, shut the stable door.

[Financially ruined, and sustained only by the love and sympathy of Nabby, Tufts leaves Fairfield. They go to Norwich, Vermont, where he practices Indian medicine, as well as the black art of magic. Difficulties, legal and other, cause him to remove to Bennington; thence to Pownal. He describes himself as "gadding about quack-like."]

While residing at Pownald, I made an excursion to Waterbury in Connecticut, and put up for the night at a new tavern, just opened in that town. The landlord had lately moved into the house, but not having brought home the whole of his furniture, I was obliged, much against my will, all may suppose, to lodge in the same room with a young woman, who was a guest there, as well as myself. I had been in bed about one hour, when, in the adjacent room, I heard a rough voice vociferating loudly, "God d——n it! where is my axe?" I was greatly alarmed, at the exclamation, thinking some mischief most certainly intended. I listened, but the bustle without, continuing,

with a clangor, ill suited to alleviate my apprehensions, finally, much like a coward to be sure, sprang out of bed in my then situation, and pushing up the window, attempted to jump through, but my linen being caught by a nail, I was held fast in the passage. The young woman screamed, as all pretty women will, "murder," when instantly the door of our apartment flew open, and in bolted with wildness of aspect, the landlord, to enquire the cause of the uproar. Instead of answering queries, I demanded, the moment I could disengage myself from the window) what he meant by calling for his axe at that late hour. He replied, that having taken several of his children into bed, they had so besmeared him from head to foot that he had been hunting for an axe to make a fire by which to cleanse himself. Repeating this, he left us; wherefore, the mystery being thus solved, I returned quietly to my lodging. But the young woman's fright, as was also natural, subsided not. She appeared to be still more alarmed as the danger disappeared, and refused to be soon comforted, beseeching me, in accents of terror, to protect her from harm. I assured her she had nothing to apprehend, for that the noise had been occasioned by a mere blunder of my own; yet, if she deemed herself unsafe, I advised her to sleep, for better security, in the same bed with me. To this she made some demur; yet, soon after, as I wished, embraced the proposal; and to say truth, which I always intend, I was as highly pleased with the person of my fair associate, during the residue of the night, as I was

anxious to obliterate an idea of the terrifying adventures of the evening.

The next morning we arose early from our delicious banquet, and, not regarding the invitation of the host, to stay to breakfast, called for our horses and immediately departed. On her way, I escorted my new acquaintance several miles, but before parting, invited her into an inn, and gave her breakfast, then bade adieu, and journeyed toward Pownald, meeting with nothing worth recital till I reached home.

Soon after this, I removed with my partner Nabby, and two children, to Wallingford in Vermont, where we abode some time. Here I procured a habit, befitting a doctor of physic, and set out on foot to make a tour through the country. Roving along I came to a place near Number four, where I halted at an inn, and was presently joined by a female guest, who had fortunately requested lodgings for the night. With this miss, who was indeed amiable, I soon scraped acquaintance, and so contrived matters, that one bed sufficed for us both until morning; I then attended her in quality of a lover, to her father's house, seven miles distant. Here certain seeming casualities protracted our courtship for the length of eight days, at the end of which I forsook my clysium by bidding the young lady farewell for the present. Hence I prosecuted my journey in a circuit toward home, and the first night brought me to a tavern, occupied by a beautiful young and debonair widow. Finding this wom-

an approachable, I made immediate love to her cheek, as delays are dangerous, boasted of my great riches, and, to speak all in a word, obtained her favor to the utmost latitude of my wishes. Having dallied in her company two nights, I took my leave with assurances of a speedy return, and straightway revisited my Abigail.

At the end of two weeks I paid the blooming widow another visit, and was most cordially received. In fine, we agreed upon marriage. But on my urging the declaration, when I might hope for its consummation, she replied, that to save the speech of people, it was her mind to cut the matter short; so we named a time, in which I was to come and stay with her, till the nuptial ceremonies should be over. Having settled the preliminaries with this agreeable woman, and partaken largely of her favors, I departed; but it was not my intention, nor in fact, did I ever happen, to set eyes on her more. The above is one of those unhallowed transactions, which though they please some readers, should afford no kind of satisfaction to the perpetrator, in the retrospect; of a truth, this and parallel instances of infidelity and deception fill me with shame and remorse, whenever they occur to mind.

On my way home, I passed, one evening, near a certain farm house, where seeing some clothes hanging upon a line, I ventured up, and grasped a man's shirt. At that instant a young woman came out to strip the line; but not finding the shirt, she cried out to her mother, "I can't

find grandfather's shirt." "No matter, said the mother, you will find it in the morning." Knowing, however, she would experience a disappointment, I hastened along, and made out to reach home the next day.

Soon after, I commended to my partner a speedy removal to Connecticut, or New York, alleging, as the cause of my wishing to reside in one of those States, that I had friends and connections in both. As she expressed entire resignation to my better judgment, I packed up our scanty all, and with the family, consisting of my temporary wife and two children, directed my course to Connecticut, but finding in that State no situation quite to our liking, I continued roving, till we had penetrated beyond the middle of New York.

My finances, by the time of finishing this expensive tour, were brought to the very lowest ebb, so that to support myself and family, with any sort of decency, required diligence, dexterity and finesse. Mauger all care, our straits were sometimes pressing; yet, with much cheerfulness, I exerted every nerve, the better to sustain the woman of my heart, and the tender offspring of our mutual love.

In no one place did we abide long at a time, but followed a straggling, irregular life, till heartily sick of so many unceasing migrations.

One day, as I was traveling to pick up a small matter of money by doctoring, I happened to approach a well-looking house; when, feeling a degree of fatigue, I went

in, though merely with an intent to rest my weary bones, for a few short minutes. Here I learned that the man of the house was very low in health, having been confined to his chamber with a lingering illness, for a long time. On requesting to see the invalid, I was introduced into his apartment, and after a short discourse, forgot not to intimate my profession as a doctor. Hearing this, the specter of a man desired me to feel his pulse, and communicate what I thought of the nature of his disorder. I did so, and hinted, that by exposing himself to cold, unwholesome weather, and the noxious damps of nightly air, he had contracted so vicious a habit, that he never could shake off, (unless by great care) the effects of his imprudence. He asked if I could supply him with anything sanative in his situation. I told him I could; and immediately gave him a variety of medicines, with instructions for their application. He then enquired if I had received no item of his situation prior to my arrival at the house. I answered in the negative; for, indeed, I had heard no more of the man than the bare mention of his name, as Doctor such a one; but by that clue I had drawn conjectures as to the nature of his disease. Finding me, at length, about to depart, he requested my bill; but I let him know I should submit that entirely to his own generosity. After a short pause, he insisted upon knowing my demand, though, he said, he had made up his mind from which he should never swerve. I was still reluctant; yet, as he seemed so urgent for my naming a sum,

I told him, he might give me about a dollar. "Twelve, said he, will be little enough; do, my dear, (speaking to his wife) take them from my bureau, and present them to the gentleman." I was really unwilling to receive so large a compensation for a service costing me so little; but he insisted upon my taking the whole, saying his own calling of a long time had been similar to mine and that my account respecting his frequent exposure to intemperate weather, and nocturnal effluvias, had been literally true. Thanking the gentleman for his liberality, and wishing him a speedy recovery, I took my leave, and a while after, had the satisfaction of hearing that my patient had regained a complete state of health, and was practicing physic as formerly.

For a number of months back my chief earnings had been derived from medical channels, and I may here say, with propriety, that my experience in medicine, however small, afforded me frequent relief, when destitute of all other resources. My amiable companion, at this period, grew discontented with our itinerary mode of life, and was so importunate for my returning nearer to the place of her nativity that I even acceded to her wishes, and removed back, to Connecticut first, and soon after to Marblehead, in the Bay State.

Chapter III

THE HANGMAN DRAWS NEAR

Oft, when incautious man forebodes no ill,
But fondly dreams of greater blessings still,
Does keen affliction mark him for its prey,
And as a besom, sweep his joys away.

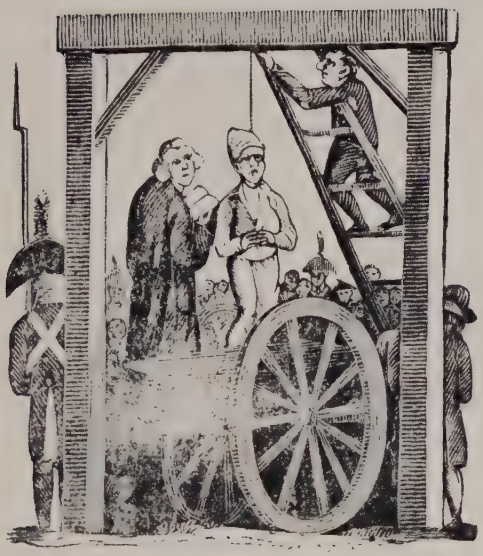
In Marblehead I hired a room in a house belonging to Lawyer Sewall, and having purchased some apothecary's drugs, and gathered such a farrago of roots, herbs, barks, etc. as clearly entitled me to the reputation of a pharmacopolist at least; I commenced business upon a more extensive scale than heretofore, visiting many patients, and having employment both from high and low. With so much diligence did I attend to my appropriate functions that I cleared, one time with another, at least three dollars per day. This tide of success remained stationary the whole time of my employment at Marblehead, which was nearly six months, and the fame of the notable cures I effected extended to no small distance.

Thus was I prospered at this period in all my lawful undertakings, and meant to pursue the same, still in a way of truth and uprightness, not once dreaming of the fatal calamities now in embryo and which I was on the eve of suffering; calamities neither to be avoided nor procrastinated.

My luckless journal has now arrived at that dread epoch of my life, by me never to be forgotten; when the most trying event, or rather tissue of events, of my checkered existence, received their unwelcome birth and configured me a devoted victim to woes unnumbered and bordering upon the confines of death. Although particular remembrance of those disastrous scenes are painful in the extreme, and my lacerated mind recoils at their recollection, yet a just regard to truth compels me to lay them before the patient reader.

In the spring of the year 1793 I bought of a John Stewart one silver tablespoon and five teaspoons of the same metal, (would to God I had never set eyes on them or him!) He told me he found them in clearing out a cellar, as he came from Philadelphia. Stewart being bare of clothing I supplied him with a fustian coat and pair of stockings by way of payment and thought no more of the transaction.

My little family made daily use of the spoons; but one morning, while I was eating breakfast, a young woman entered my apartment, who happened to espy and know them. Leaving the house away she posted to the former owner, Daniel Jacobs, of Danvers, and informed him of the circumstance. My apprehension was the immediate consequence of this. I was presently convened before Esq. Sewall, and questioned as to the manner of my acquiring the articles; my answer to the court was that I had bought them of one John Stewart. For this man,



then, immediate search was made; he was found, brought forward, and examined, but his testimony was hardly so explicit as I had wished; however, it amounted pretty nearly to a confession that he had sold me the spoons. Thus far all was right, and I thought myself in expectation of a ready acquittal, as soon as Stewart should be brought to a proper acknowledgment of the truth, which, saving self crimination, I expected he would. But a certain sheriff, (who was, as was generally the case, no friend of mine) being present, and fearing, I conclude, that Stewart would confess all, to his own detriment without doubt, called him aside to sift, as I then thought, something more from the witness. What their private conference was, I know not, but Stewart immediately took leg bail and made his escape; never after was it, most unfortunately, in my power to investigate the place of his retreat.

By the above and other proceedings it was plain that my adversaries were contriving to fasten upon me the crime of burglary, in respect of Jacobs' house, of which enormity, God knows, I was then, as I am now, entirely innocent. I had no other witness than Stewart whose testimony could assist me in the least; I could, therefore, make no further defense; and the shocking result of the whole was my commitment to Salem jail, there to abide trial at the sitting of the next supreme court.

My housekeeper, Nabby, however adulterous our connection, was deeply afflicted at this most unlucky turn of

my affairs. How piercing to my heart were her complaints, her tears and lamentations! With what infinite regret did I leave, at this fatal period, her amiable society, and that of our innocent and beloved children, in exchange for the dreary mansions of a jail! But fate, cruel fate, had thus ordained the series of events, and to its rigid decrees I must submit of necessity.

Our parting scene was tender, was affecting, far beyond my feeble skill of utterance. Scarce did the smallest ray of hope soothe my imagination, that the exulting joy would return to me, of participating again in the cares or the comforts of my little family; but on the contrary, gloomy presages of the nameless miseries awaiting, erected their dark dominion over the strongest powers of my fancy.

The sheriff, named above, led me to the horrid mansion pointed out for my present reception; and when the grating bolts announced a close, an insuperable bar, "seem'd plac'd 'twixt happiness and me."

Ten desponding days I lingered in "durance vile," without a straggling ray of hope to beam on my benighted mind; but at the end of those days of torment, I received a visit, welcome, though at the grates, from a man and woman of former acquaintance. They purposely gave me much verbal abuse; but, at the same time, furnished me privately with two compass saws, a screw auger, and gimlet; and having rendered me this capital

and unexpected service, took their leave by bidding me "a speedy passage to the gallows."

This unexpected turn of fortune in my favor, so far removed disconsolate reveries that with the implements I fell briskly to work in the sanguine hope of cutting a passage through the walls of the prison. After a tiresome operation, I brought the process near to its completion; when unluckily, at a critical moment I was betrayed by a negro prisoner who informed the keeper of my design.

My removal to Ipswich jail, the strongest, esteemed, in the county, was the consequence of this disaster, but I had the address, as I thought fortunately, to secrete a compass saw between the outer and inner soles of my shoe. I had been cooped in this latter prison scarce twenty-four hours ere I began a resolute attack upon the grates, and so very rapidly drove my purpose that, in three days I sawed off all the irons appertaining to one of the windows. My success thus far had been brilliant; everything seemed to concur in favoring my escape, insomuch that I fixed upon the next evening for breaking bulk. How did my heart leap at this juncture! how palpitate after that liberty which I thought myself on the verge of realizing! again, with what rapture did I anticipate the pleasing felicity which, in some secluded spot, I might enjoy in the arms of my dear mistress! How vexatiously mortifying then was my disappointment when I saw my plan of escape once more defeated. The keeper had made discovery of the whole; at first I knew not

how, yet afterwards learned that to one, Lumber, a shoplifter, were my thanks due for the revelation of the secret.

The prison keeper rebuked me sharply for the mischief done to the jail, and then ordered my removal into another cell, of superior strength to the former. Now, as a punishment for late misdemeanors, and for better security, I was strongly handcuffed and chained by one foot to the floor. Fortunately, however, I still retained my little saw, and the day of trial drawing near, I spent no time heedlessly, but fell industriously to work, and cut through my shackles in such a peculiar way that I could put them off and on at pleasure. Thus was I at liberty to explore the limits of this horrid cell; but, on research, it proved so invincibly strong that most people, I think, would have abandoned the thoughts of attempting its fracture, deeming the task altogether romantic. But, as I had learned by long apprenticeship to encounter any difficulties where was visible the least prospect of success, so now, with patient pains, I began the elaborate process of digging through the floor. This was a tedious undertaking, by means of the interruptions I experienced continually, not only from casual visitors but also from the prisoners themselves, who obliged me to use extreme caution as the least disturbance in my cell was a sufficient token for alarm.

I was thus critically circumstanced; yet, in spite of the many obstructions that environed me on all sides, I succeeded so far in the course of a week, by dint of mere

perseverance, as to drill a hole quite through the flooring. Its circumference was ample, and afforded me an easy gangway into the prison office, or vault, which, by the feeling, I thought might be penetrated with a mere trifle of pains. Upon the whole, no obstacles seemed capable of impeding my exit save a quantity of dirt and stones which lay beneath the floor, and which I found must be removed to facilitate a sub passage into the jail yard. These difficulties were soon vanquished, except that one huge stone lay across the way so as to afford insufficient room for passing it on either side. This was an impediment I had not anticipated; it was now obvious that no door of escape could be opened unless the fatal rock should by some strategem be displaced. The task appeared Herculean, yet I set about it with all the fortitude I could muster. In the first instance my efforts turned to the sinking of it by undermining; but, after repeated trials and much labor expended, that method proved impracticable. I next essayed to dislodge it by the help of a small pry, but it stubbornly refused to give ground to the feeble instruments within my limits.

For three whole days and nights did I wreck my invention, and waste my utmost strength in plotting and executing ways and means to surmount this only remaining obstacle to my freedom; yet did constant disappointment attend all my exertions; the fatal rock was not to be removed.

Faint and dispirited with bootless toil and sleepless

nights I sat down upon a bench, wholly resigning myself to those gloomy thoughts which the idea of my situation naturally inspired. Hitherto I had flattered myself with the prospect of achieving a deliverance by breaking the prison walls; but this last hope, like "the baseless fabric of a vision," had now vanished into air, and left but a span for the arrangement of new measures. Indeed, the day of my impending trial was near at hand; a day much dreaded, the mere thoughts of which, alas, staggered my resolution and agitated my enfeebled frame.

Wishing, however, a momentary respite from the pressure of distracting care, I stretched my limbs, exhausted with ceaseless watchfulness and toil, upon a bed of straw, seeking alleviation from repose; but gentle sleep refused to shed its wonted, balmy blessings on my head. The whole of this depressing night to me was sleepless; and nearly in the same sad situation was I when the Thursday next following the second Tuesday in June, 1793, (the same being the day of trial) made its ill boding appearance.

About eleven o'clock in the forenoon the sheriffs conducted me from the prison to the court house, where the solemnity of the court, and the silence of the spectators who had collected in crowds to hear the interesting trial, conspired to render the scene awfully impressive upon my feelings beyond description.

At the reading of the indictment the attorney general, James Sullivan, Esq., demanded if I knew for what crime

I was about to be tried; I answered negatively; on which he gave me to understand that I stood charged with burglary, a capital offense in the estimation of law, and that, consequently, the trial affected my life. The court demanded whether I had any counsel? I replied, no, and was directed to nominate such persons as I wished to assist me. I named Theophilus Parsons, Esq., but he declining, several of the bar recommended to my choice, Messrs. Sewall and Dana, as gentlemen of probity and talents who would certainly do justice to my cause. To those gentlemen, then, I made application; and, without much hesitancy they undertook the arduous, uninviting task of making my defense; I shall ever think myself under the highest obligations to these honorable characters for their goodness to me on that momentous occasion.

The attorney general arose first in behalf of the Commonwealth, stating the charges against me with candor, and even, as I thought, with tenderness. Two witnesses were produced, Daniel Jacobs and Margaret Medossy, his maid, who swore that the spoons in question were the property of the complainant, Jacobs; that his house had been broken open in the night, when the same were carried away; and that they saw, at the time, (though they confessed it to be a dark night) some man running out of the house in a great hurry. This man, by legal construction, was interpreted to be myself, since the property had been found in my custody. I had no witness to produce on my side, as Stewart was not to be found.

Mr. Sewall opened my defense in a masterly and ingenious manner, the particulars of which I recollect but indistinctly, for, indeed, my mind was too greatly distracted at that time to permit my being master of much recollection. He clearly and forcibly urged the incompetency of the witnesses who, he said, was disreputable people; known frequently to be intoxicated; to keep a disorderly house, and to be, generally of such bad fame and character as rendered them unworthy of credence in cases like the present, where the life of the respondent was at stake. He stated, also, the probability of Stewart's having sold me the spoons, and dwelt on the moral impossibility of the witnesses being able to discriminate a man running out of a house in a night so dark as was confessedly the one in question.

Mr. Dana also exerted himself to convince the jury that I ought in justice to be acquitted, placing, in a conspicuous point of view, the extreme hardship of my being convicted and condemned to death, in a case of this kind, upon the testimony of witnesses so worthless and abandoned as were those who had appeared on the trial. In a word, both Mr. Sewall and Mr. Dana argued the cause, from beginning to end, in a very plausible and moving manner, but without the good effect of obtaining my acquittal.

As soon as they had closed the defense, Mr. Sullivan again addressed the jury, telling them, among other things, that it was indeed a hard case, and that they ought

to be cautious, especially in an affair of life and death, in what manner they gave credit to witnesses of suspicious characters, such as those of Jacobs and Medossy. He observed further that, although burglary was a capital offense by the laws of man, it was not so by the laws of God, but if their verdict should declare me guilty of that crime, legal rigor would exact my life. He told them they had a right to consider the matter as they should think equitable and just, and that if they acquitted me altogether, nothing could be objected to their verdict. In short, I conceived the whole strain of his discourse to be as much in my favor as his official character would suffer him.

Justice Paine gave the principal charge to the jury in terms calculated to strengthen such impressions as might favor my cause, signifying, (as well as I remember) that the peculiar circumstances of the case then confided to their decision required some degree of caution and lenity in the construction. The jury then withdrew, and after a while returned into court "not agreed," Mr. Thurstin, one of the twelve, not coinciding with his brethren to bring in the verdict, *guilty*. They were sent out a second time, but the same gentleman was still against declaring me guilty of burglary. The other jurors were unanimous, but being unable to convince him, they went into court as before without coming to a definite conclusion. They were then sent out a third and fourth time; but the dissenting juror was told that sufficient time for considera-

tion had been taken, and that it was necessary to agree upon something. Now it was that much altercation ensued, but at last Mr. Thurstin, by some means or other was prevailed on to concur so far with the opinion of his associates that an unqualified verdict declaring me guilty of the burglary was returned into court and recorded by the same. I was in court when the tidings of this fatal determination saluted my ears; a few minutes after which I was conveyed to prison; but, within an hour was again brought back to court to hear the definitive sentence. It was repeated to me by Judge Paine, and contained, among other things, these dreadful words, by me never to be forgotten. *"That I must be carried from thence to the place of execution, and there hanged by the neck until dead."* The dismal ceremony of reading my destiny having ended, I was remanded to prison, six weeks only being given me in which to make the last necessary preparations for death. The day prefixed for my executioin was Thursday the fourteenth of August, 1793.*

* On the subject of this trial, and later events of the same summer, described in the next chapter, see note on page 347, "The Six Silver Spoons."—E.P.

Chapter IV

AND THE GRAVE IS DUG

Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

BIBLE.

Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus.

VIRGIL.

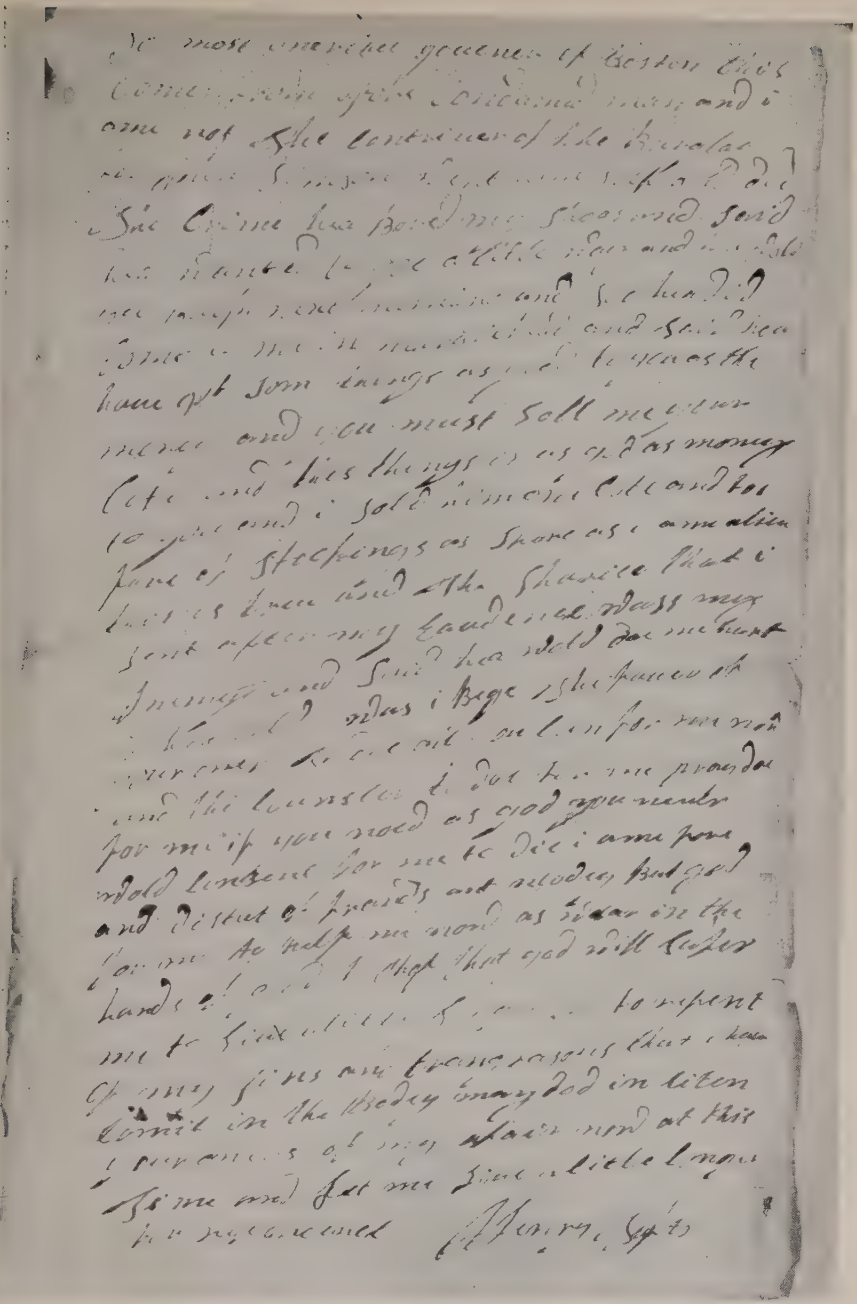
BEING thus under condemnation of death, I was put into rigid confinement and loaded with chains. It was industriously rumored that despair would hurry me on to strenuous exertions with a view to effectuate an escape; to prevent which, the strictest attention was paid to every movement. Well might the vigilance of the keepers have discouraged any one, it certainly did me, since I was not only intimidated from attempting to break jail, but for a number of days lay entirely lifeless, a prey to corroding care and fearful expectation.

At this deplorable season an uncommon stupor benumbed my intellect; the usual fertility of my invention abandoned me and death only, in haggard form, arose to my fearful view. But my faithful partner forsook me not; she visited me in prison at all possible opportunities, endeavoring to appease my wounded spirits and, with the balm of comfort, to alleviate my afflictions. Such was her benevolence that she freely imparted whatever she could

procure when she thought it would contribute in the least either to my ease or advantage. Her kindness tranquilized, in a measure, the dreary chaos of passions that reigned within my breast, and lessened those distresses, corporeal and spiritual, which else, in this extremity, had been intolerable. Through her instrumentality I conveyed divers letters to my friends and to others whom I supposed able or willing to afford me assistance. A number of my acquaintance condescended to make me repeated visits, bringing money and other necessaries, while everybody seemed to pity my forlorn condition and think my fate extremely hard.

Mr. Thurstin, above-named, soon greatly regretted his consenting to the verdict of condemnation, on which account he went to Governor Adams and the council; told them his opinion, and how uneasy he had been since agreeing, contrary to his better judgment, to the verdict returned. Moreover, with much zeal, he represented me (and that more than once, I believe) as deserving the particular notice and compassion of his excellency.

Meantime, I prepared a petition, couched in becoming terms, and sent it to the governor, who, as I was told, had the power of pardon in his fee, beseeching that my punishment of death might be remitted, or exchanged for confinement to the castle during life. To this petition I received no answer whatever. I afterwards forwarded another to much the same purport, but obtaining no answer, could not but consider his taciturnity as an in-



Henry Tufts' petition to Governor Adams

auspicious omen. I wrote also a petition to the students of Cambridge college, praying them to intercede with the governor in my behalf, by petition or otherwise, as best suited their convenience, and this they had the humanity to do, for which they have my sincere thanks. But beside those several applications, entreating a mitigation of my doom, another address from Ipswich, signed by many ladies of that town, was preferred to his excellency the governor, stating the peculiar austerity of my doom, and recommending me to consideration and clemency. To those humane and compassionate ladies, who in the hour of my adversity, condescended to intercede thus in prevention of my untoward fate, I tender the most humble acknowedgments; of their goodness and beneficence I shall retain, ever, the liveliest remembrance. Beyond the foregoing, divers other applications were made to the governor to move his mercy and justice in my peculiar case, but, above all, my reputed wife, Nabby, whose native eloquence was unexcelled, went in person, and in most pathetic terms addressed the governor and council, in my stead, praying that the punishment of death might be waved, and exchanged for confinement in the castle. The fervency of her supplications made a deep impression upon the minds of the members of the council, who confessed they never heard woman, nor indeed person, make so moving and pathetic an address before.

But to all those petitions and requests I received no kind of reply, nor indeed of encouragement, that anything was

likely to be effected in my favor; but rather did common report insinuate the contrary. This dark and dubious complexion of things filled me with horrible prognostics; bereft me of the prospect of pardon or reprieve, and blasted all my hopes concerning the petitions I had transmitted. No longer did I profit or expect advantage from the intercessions which had been made by others to promote my rescue from the fangs of death.

To prepare, then, for departure hence seemed to be high time, since to me, according to the deadly sentence, two weeks only were remaining on this side the grave. The awful thoughts of exchanging worlds, in my present unprepared state, smote me with horror of mind, and with a dismay the most exquisitely painful. How short a time, in which to make those extraordinary preparations necessary for changing time for eternity, did two weeks appear! How impossible to set about so great a business, in my present distracted situation, did I think it; especially as my life and conversation had been always so totally repugnant to every consideration of a religious nature! How bitterly, then, did I deplore former follies, and the fatal consequences of my glaring misconduct! Alas, thought I, to what a miserable end am I born! how completely wretched has my past life ever been! how many hardships and distresses have I borne! how many follies and crimes have I committed! how many trials have I encountered! how many dangers, escaped; and with how many calamities and evils have I, at all times,

been surrounded! what a gloomy retrospect do the horrid scenes of my strange life afford! the aspect, how somber, of the ruthless picture, and how totally thrown into shade! In fine, how small a portion of happiness have I experienced, and how few and fleeting have been the halcyon days of my melancholy existence! With reflections similar to the above was my perturbed imagination perplexed incessantly, at this momentous period.

But to resume my irksome tale. The days that yet remained to me being few and passing away with a rapidity that awakened amazement; and as whatever I intended to do must be speedily, if ever, effected, it occurred to my thoughts afresh, that I had better, once for all, make a last final effort in procurement of deliverance. Wherefore, with a saw, which I had hitherto preserved, I fell to cutting off the grates, though of a monstrous and forbidding size. I soon made considerable proficiency; but, as destiny ordained, my design, when all but completed, was entirely discomfitted by the prisoners, who notified the jailor of my desperate attempts.

On this side the grave I knew of no other device, of which to profit, save the one I had last attempted; it was plain, therefore, I could do nothing more nor less, than await, with resignation, the approach of my awful fate, and prepare for a final exit from this fluctuating scene of things.

One morning, as I was sitting in a very disconsolate posture, a devotee to misery and despair, I was visited by a

certain physician, who accosted me with an affability and good nature, not always to be expected from a stranger. Indeed, sunshine sat upon his countenance, and honey distilled from his lips; but, after continuing his discourse some time, and presenting me with the grief dispelling goblet, he introduced the subject of his business, which was, to purchase my body, after death, for a skeleton. He thought there could be no harm or inconvenience in this, but to tempt a more cheerful compliance, proffered me a couple of guineas, in hand, beside other favors. Notwithstanding his easy introduction, the proposal struck me with horror ineffable, so that I repelled his suit with an asperity that prevented further solicitation on that behalf.

Directly upon this, I was visited by another gentleman, from Newburyport, who offered me seventy dollars for license to publish a narrative of my adventures. I informed him, that, in present circumstances, I had neither leisure nor inclination, to bestow the thoughts of a moment upon matters of that nature. But, to obviate this, he suggested, that he wished me to sign a paper of three or four words only, for that he knew enough of my history (with what he should be able to pick up) to make out a handsome narrative. On hearing the gentleman say this, it struck my mind, that, although I should have no use for the seventy dollars, myself, yet that sum might be serviceable to my companion, and requite her, in some small measure, for the numerous kindnesses she had

shown me in my recent adversities. Accordingly, I told the man I would take a week for consideration, and to consult with my friends on the subject, at the end of which time I would give him a suitable reply. He approved of this caution, and, having promised to return for the result of my deliberations, left my cell for that time.

A few hours subsequent to his departure, came along Esq. Manning, a gentleman whom I much respected. I acquainted him with the proposition I had received for a narrative or journal of my life, and begged him to assist me with his able advice. He said it was his opinion, that I ought, by no means, to concur with any plan of the kind, at present, for it might frustrate the effect of the petitions and other measures, which were in operation to avert the consequences of my sentence. Furthermore he counseled me not to despond, but hope for the best, adding, that he himself would go to the governor, and do all in his power to have me reprieved, or sent to the castle. The counsel and encouragement of this good man infused a gleam of hope into my desponding heart; always shall I preserve a due sense of the prompt and substantial benefits, which I received at his hands.

The next day was brought me an anonymous epistle to the following purport.

Ipswich, August 5th, 1793.

SIR,—I HEARD, last evening, by mere accident, of your receiving a visit from a gentleman belonging to Newburyport; and that

his object was to procure toleration to publish a journal of your life. At this crises of your fate, I must advise you, as a friend, to listen, in no respect, to a proposal of that kind, as the transaction would presently take air, and obstruct, perhaps, the good effect of the petitions and other expedients, which have been used to effectuate your rescue from the gripe of death. It is suggested, too, that you are to furnish some final answer to his proposal, within a week. As you value your life and safety, I admonish you to be firm and steadfast in refusing this and every other similar application, at least for the present. I hope you will improve these friendly hints to your own advantage, and, of this scroll, keep the contents to yourself.

From your well wisher, &c. ———

Before the receipt of this letter, I had fully made up my opinion, as to the subject of which it treated. The advice of Esq. Manning, had confirmed me in a decision to decline all overtures, for the present, relative to my narrative, or its publication. Thus, when the gentleman from Newbury, called again at my window, for an answer, as had been our former conversation, I gave him an explicit denial.

On the Sunday next preceding the Thursday, on which I expected to launch into the world of spirits, I attended public worship, through the kind indulgence of the sheriff, as had been my constant practice for a number of sabbaths previous. I made my appearance loaded, as I was, with manacles and chains, to the end that a stronger impression might be wrought upon the sensibility of the spectators, and their commiseration excited in reference to my unhappy fate. A miserable fellow mortal, loaded

with trammels, and upon the brink itself of eternity, must, of course, be a spectacle at once solemn and distressing! Well might the sight of such wretchedness agitate the feelings of the humane and reflecting! Even so, at this time, did my appearance in the meeting excite universal compassion; the sympathetic sigh escaped from the benevolent breast; and soft emotion was visible in the countenance of each beholder. But the heartfelt distress, the horrible forebodings, which on that memorable day, I myself experienced, especially during performance of divine service, remain deeply graven, on the tablet of my memory, in characters too indelible to be effaced by the corrosions of time. My distress, however, arose not so much from the fears of death, though awful, indeed, in itself, since a few momentary pangs would complete its triumph, as from the dreadful thoughts of appearing, in my present unprepared state, before the tribunal of that judge, who knoweth the heart, and who maketh not a shadow of allowance for obstinate transgression.

After divine service I was again consigned to the same loathsome station in prison, which hitherto I had occupied, and measures taken to preclude even the possibility of escape.

My friends, still continued to visit me, and to administer to my necessities in the kindest manner. Here gratitude prompts an acknowledgment of the great obligations I am under to divers gentlemen of the priesthood, for favoring me with repeated visits during the horrors of this

imprisonment. For their pious admonitions and zealous endeavors to promote my spiritual welfare, and fortify my mind against the shafts of adversity, they are entitled to my peculiar thanks. Particularly, I feel much indebted to the Rev. Mr. Frisbey,* of Ipswich, who gave me frequently, the wholesomest instruction, and endeavored to elevate my thoughts above the servile fears of death; to enlighten my understanding, and to inspire me with the hopes of a blessed immortality: I trust his godly counsel and fervent petitions, for my spiritual amendment, will not be wholly thrown away.

With pleasure, did the limits of my paper admit, would I particularize the many favors of a temporal nature, that were shown me by a number of well disposed persons, witness to my cruel sufferings. But I must repress disfusion, and observe only, that most of my visitors treated me with great kindness; seemed heartily to pity my oblique fate, and endeavored to soothe the bitterness of my afflictions. Their attempts were unavailing, my heart was inconsolable, since hope, the cork of life, was beyond my grasp.

If I took a cursory view of past life, I could discern nought therein, which was capable, in the least, of affording satisfaction; for little else than dissipation and mischief had been its uniform productions. I now felt the

* This was the Rev. Levi Frisbie, pastor of the First Church of Ipswich, 1776-1806. See T. F. Waters: *Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony* Vol. II.—*E.P.*

want of the support of religion and virtue, and found, with the force of conviction, that the great, the primary source of peace to the human mind is the consciousness of having traveled in the paths of uprightness; that, in proportion as a man's life is well or ill spent, his real happiness or misery may be calculated. Alas! of this happiness I could only lament the want; each successive day, by abridging my momentary span, loading me with increased apprehensions, and presenting to my view new traits of misery and wretchedness.

How gladly, at this juncture, had I drunk of the waters of Lethe, and quaffed everlasting forgetfulness? but, in vain were all my wishes and imaginations; they availed not to suppress the rising sigh or ease the mental pang! Even my slumbering hours were not exempt from disquiet, since, from the day of condemnation, I could scarce close my eyelids in sleep, but images of deep distress would present themselves to my distorted vision. Very frequently I dreamed of being hurried to the place of execution, and of swinging off the stand, though it generally seemed, as if the rope gave way, and that my body was dashed precipitately against the ground. This I was willing to construe into a distant prognostic, that, by some means or other, as yet inscrutable, I should finally evade my terrific doom. Sometimes fancy painted me as creeping out of jail, beneath the floor, with amazing difficulty; sometimes did I imagine myself at large in the open

street, but with little or no strength to flee from my pursuers; thus was I agitated whether sleeping or waking.

One day about noon, as I was lying on a bed of straw, I received a smart rap on the crown of my head; I was wide awake at the instant, and could therefore be liable to no misconception or delusion. I cast my eyes about, but saw no living object, not even a mouse was stirring; indeed I was wholly alone in my cell at the time. The singularity of this occurrence alarmed me greatly; I knew not in what maner to account for it, nor have I to this day made out the least probable solution of the mystery.

The day next before my expected execution, the faithful Abigail made me, for the last time, a visit in prison; but her presence, by bringing to mind former happiness, served only to enhance the bitterness of our present evils. Having bewailed our hard destiny and accumulated misfortunes, till evening had spread her sable mantle around the prison walls, we took a solemn and final farewell of each other, expecting no more to meet on this side eternity. Good Heavens! how many, multiplied sufferings, both of body and mind, have fallen to my share?

But now appears the dreadful morn of August the 14th, which terror had depicted, as the last I should ever behold. Between the hours of two and four, afternoon, if I recollect exactly, was my sentence of death to receive consummation. On this day, every object meeting my eyes seemed to be enveloped with a deeply tinged gloom, and to assume the ghastly visage of death, while every

sound invading the ear increased my perplexity and distress. Although, so many repeated messages had been transmitted to the governor, I learned not that grace was likely to prevail, or that measures had been adopted for my pardon or reprieve, but the contrary.

About eight o'clock I descried the sexton passing by with his pick axe, hoe and shovel, to dig my grave beneath the gallows. This horrid sight almost petrified my senses, and fixed me as a statue, in speechless astonishment.

An hour or two after, a certain schoolmistress, coming in, and looking through my window, exclaimed in a tremor, that she had just beheld an awful sight, namely, a coffin made and a grave dug for a living man. Her abrupt speech affected me with new surprise, and augmented, if possible, my unutterable consternation.

By this time multitudes of people were fast arriving in order to be spectators of the melancholy execution. I saw them in crowds, through the grates, and heard them often inquiring, "Where is the man who is going to be hanged?" "At what time will he be hanged?" At last Edward Brock, a prisoner overhead, damned them aloud, and said, "I am in good hopes you won't see that sight today." At this exclamation some of the people cried out, "Dear me! hear how the man swears, when he is just going to the gallows." The last hour of my surviving time drew near, I shuddered at the sound of every footstep, as it had been the approach of the angel of death!

Each moment, was my imagination upon the rack, lest I should hear the iron bolts resound, and the prison doors grate, on their revolving hinges, to open a passage to the scaffold.

While brooding over these images of terror, my attention was suddenly arrested by the arrival of several deputy sheriffs; at sight of those ministers of vengeance a general tremor pervaded my whole frame. I verily believed, that the curtain was about to drop upon the last closing scene of my life's disastrous drama. They perceived my perturbation, and, from motives of humanity, were solicitous to administer consolation, declaring, that, although they came on this ungrately errand, they still felt for my misfortunes, and should be happy to procure their alleviation. The accents of philanthrophy, even in my forlorn condition, sounded gratefully in my ears; may I remember to succor, (when ability permits) the distresses of others!

At three o'clock, afternoon, the officers gave me notice, that they had received no orders for my removal, as yet; but were now in momentary expectation of a warrant for conducting me to the place of execution. To pave the way for extremities, they inculated the invincible necessity of a due submission to the laws; yet, were anxious to appease the agitation of my spirits. While those extraordinary scenes were on the tapis,

> The wheel of unremitting time was rolling on
> Toward th' important hour of four, the time prefix'd,

said Henry Sulls to be done and performed in all things, according to the form and effect of the said Judgement; for which this shall be your sufficient Warrant:

Hereof fail not at your peril, and make return of this Writ with your doings herein into our Secretary's Office, within Thirty days.

In Testimony whereof, we have caused our great Seal to be hereunto affixed. Witness Samuel Adams Esq.r our Governor and Commander in Chief at Boston, this twenty seventh day of June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred and ninety four, and in the eighteenth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

By His Excellency's Command, with the advice and Consent of the Council.

John Avery Jun.r Secr.y

Samuel Adams.

End of the Death Warrant

Ere which to close my fate. The hour I wish'd o'erpast,
Adjudging it the crisis of my fearful doom.
At length, with tardy steps, reluctant, did arrive
The moment big, and mark'd, by iron hand of time;
Its knell brought tidings sweet and grateful to my heart;
Did joy dispense, and hope and transport to my breast;
Since now the pangs of death I fondly thought to shun,
And live again to happiness, and blest repose.

In other words, at four of the clock precisely the flight of the fatal hour was announced by the deputies, who assured me, that no message to my detriment had arrived, within the time; so that the matter was now made certain, that execution was respited; but for how long they could not avouch. These were thrice grateful tidings, yet the business seemed enveloped in mystery insoluble; for the residue of the eventful day, however, I met with no new alarm or fresh disturbance.

Thus by the goodness of God, did I at this time, very contrary to my fears and expectations, escape the bitterness of death; and although I knew not the length of my reprieve, yet the present deliverance exonerated my feelings of a vast load of inquietude. Peradventure some may admire that the thoughts of death should excite in me such wonderful alarms; but I can tell them, from experience, that the stoutest heart will quake even at its anticipated approach, and that the poet's ideas were correct, when he said,

"Death at a distance we but slightly fear;
He brings his terrors, as he draws more near."

The people, who had collected to the number (as was said) of three thousand, dispersed in the same manner as they came; but seeing their gathering had been little gratifying to my feelings, I was far from regretting their departure.

Soon as the shades of evening prevailed, I betook myself to early repose, for in truth I had received small refreshment, from sleep or food, I know not for how long. Now then, being retired from the converse and bustle of the world, and having a fit opportunity to contemplate on my surprising deliverance, I found abundant cause (wicked and inconsiderate as I generally was) to thank the Father of mercies for his divine interposition in my behalf. The ensuing morning I awoke from sleep, in better health and spirits, than I had lately enjoyed, and received a visit from my companion Nabby. Upon review of this unexpected turn of things in my favor, her transports were excessive, and her belief sanguine, that my punishment, in the end, would be exchanged for confinement at the castle. I received visits, also, from others of my friends, who congratulated me on the present favorable aspect of my concerns.

Soon as conveniency admitted, I sent to Governor Adams, to know the result of my destiny, but could obtain no intelligence in the least. I lingered in uncertainty until the eighteenth of the then next September, when information was brought, that I was to be sent to the castle for life. These had been doleful tidings, at any other

period, yet I now received them with joy and thankfulness.

No long time was given for contemplation, ere a sheriff arrived with the order of removal, and conducted me to the castle, which is situated on an island in the harbor of Boston.

The castle, so called, is a fortress of some strength and commands the entrance into the harbor's mouth. About thirty pieces of artillery were then mounted on its battlements, the whole being occupied by a company of soldiers, stationed there, to superintend the works and guard the criminals. At the time of my arrival, fifty or more persons, of that description, were under confinement, and doomed to hard service. They were a motley crew, consisting of different kinds of people, as well black as white, and of divers nations and languages; to wit, some French, English, Dutch, Spanish, Irish and American convicts; the latter, however, were the more numerous order. On further acquaintance, I found them a heterogeneous mixture of as vile miscreants and execrable wretches, as human conception could have framed ideas of; there had been no impropriety in pronouncing them the mere dregs of human nature; the refuse and offscouring of the whole globe.

In such detestable society it was impossible to see either peace or comfort. The principal employment assigned them was nail making, of which the soldiers had the

superintendance, and, upon the smallest appearance of idleness or obstinacy, would beat them like dogs.

I was immediately set to work with the rest; but in truth, had no particular gust for my new employment, and still less for the company of my associates. They were, in fact, addicted to every species of villainy, which they could possibly perpetrate with impunity, such as cursing, swearing, cheating, lying, quarreling and stealing from one another, for which misdemeanors, they were frequently reprimanded by the sentries, and sometimes treated with inhuman cruelty. But rigorous treatment was so far from reclaiming, that it served only to increase their vicious habits, and to inspire them with a spirit of revenge against their overseers, whom, as well as the rest of mankind, they considered as enemies, on whom they were justified in making whatever reprisals.

Such was the company among whom my hard lot had now fallen, and the contemplation which arose was a source of unceasing vexation. I incessantly pined after that liberty, of which, by folly and indiscretion, I saw myself so totally divested.

At the termination of each day's labor, we were all shut up in prison, as sheep in a fold, and, for prevention of escapes, in the night, were critically guarded by sentinels without. . . .

The majority, while prisoners, being very restless and refractory under the severity of their discipline, and the hardships they endured, were continually projecting

methods of escape, and not altogether unsuccessfully; for, once in a while, one or two, and sometimes more of them, mauger the circumspection of the guards, would find the means of elopement. Recollect, that once in particular, eleven of them absconded in a body, by the connivance, as was supposed, of the sentry, their guard. They left the island in a fishing smack, which they made bold to seize; but, being hotly pursued, had to fight in self defense, before passing the harbor's mouth; some circumstances, however, turning up in their favor, they, at last, made shift to get out of harm's way, and finally escaped. Those and similar desertions would have thinned the ranks, and greatly diminished our numbers, had not the occasional arrival of new malefactors, as bad or worse than the former, furnished ample supplies, and thus kept the stock good.

Our provisions, for the chief part, were coarse bread and bullock's heads only, the same being usually tainted before leaving the shambles. Horrid stuff! the nausea arising from which was so extreme, that I had much ado to swallow even a quantum sufficient for the sustentation of life. By degrees I became emaciated, nearly to a skeleton, yet was not the less compelled to turn out, and perform ordinary duties with the rest of the prisoners.

One day, as I was helping unload a vessel, I had the misfortune to tumble over a wharf, and break one of my arms! As I had no surgeon to attend me, the accident was peculiarly distressing. I lay, for a long while, in a

perilous position and suffered so dismally from the want of suitable medicines, attendance, and the necessary comforts of life, that I frequently despaired of any recovery. Many a time I wished, that the sovereign arbiter of events had been graciously pleased to end my complicated miseries by a speedy death; yet, considering that life was sweet, even to the beasts that perish, and to the animals of the lonely wilderness, it would return to my thoughts, that man, more particularly, should live in the use of means, and cherish self-preservation, as a duty indispensable.

While I was in this unfortunate situation, my supposed wife, Nabby, once in a while, would come to my new residence, bringing clothing, and such cordials as might be purchased with her scanty earnings; thus alleviating by her friendly help, my uncommon calamities.

After two months painful illness, I regained strength to cripple abroad, but having neither shoes nor much clothing, and it being, too, the extreme of winter, I felt myself in a very slender condition. On this account, however, I was nothing favored, for soon as my convalescency became visible, I was set to work, and forced to perform daily labor, in the same manner, as if I had been quite healthy, and well equipped for the season.

To these hardships I submitted with patience, till, by being bandied about so incessantly, barefoot, through frost and snow, my feet and ankles were frozen to such a degree, that the skin and nails wholly dropped off. This new misfortune confined me to quarters for a season, but

no sooner was I in plight to crawl about, than I was driven to and fro, as heretofore, which caused my feet continually to bleed, and prevented their healing. To complain signified nothing, for, with my haughty taskmasters, complaints were but the signals for more blows and greater severity. . . .

As the summer of 1794 advanced, it stood the soldiery in hand to exert more vigilance in prevention of desertions, for the criminals, disrelishing their execrable diet and ill treatment, were continually devising plans of emancipation. My own exigencies were egregiously pressing, so that many a time I had bartered, with cheerfulness, my every particle of property for one comfortable repast; yet could rarely obtain a single mouthful even by purchase. One evening, while in this extremity, I made out, through the assistance of a negro prisoner, to obtain thirty weight of pork from the cellar of Major Perkins, the commandant of the castle. I had renounced the commission of theft in my own person, therefore persuaded the black fellow to enter the premises, while I stood sentry, which accomplished, we made an equal dividend of the spoils, and were so lucky to escape detection or surmise.

Shortly after this I received a visit from sundry of my friends residing at Malden, who offered to disguise, and convey me off the island; this proposal I was at first, tempted to embrace, yet finally my heart failed, and I gave up the project.

Thus wore away the summer of 1794, till drew near the

fourth of July, the anniversary of American independence. We heard that preparations were making, in many places, for a joyful celebration of the day, in remembrance of that auspicious era, which gave freedom to the western world. To us, poor prisoners, the favor of enjoying this festival was indeed denied, yet it being quite as prudent, under the frowns of malicious fortune, to be merry as sad, and much more delightful to the feelings, I think it not amiss to give place to an ode, written at that time, as much as possible, in the then enthusiastic spirit of the times. The sons of the muses will forbear criticism.

Hail! heroes, patriots divine,
On whom the rays of freedom shine
With the bright meridian blaze,
Once more conven'd to celebrate
Your rising empire's glorious date,
And Freedom's column raise. . . .

With reeking sword we sought the prize,
The brightest gem beneath the skies,
Whilst blood in torrents run;
Freedom to Vict'ry stood allied,
The laurel won, while on our side
Fought heav'n and Washington.

Then loud proclaim the' important hour,
That broke the iron rod of power,
And blest this happy shore;
May distant ages tribute pay
To celebrate th' auspicious day,
'Till time shall be no more.

I had already lingered at the castle three-fourths of a

year without seeking the means of escape, but the freedom I had once enjoyed, would sometimes obtrude itself like the image of a delicious dream, and force me to regret my present slavery. Major Perkins had occasionally employed me in many little services, and my alacrity in the performance, had pleased him; wherefore, on my promising not to abuse his confidence, he gave me license to traverse the island, whenever, I saw fit. It contained about twenty acres, enough to afford a tolerable ramble; but, one afternoon, led by an irresistible desire of musing in solitude, I made a more complex circuit, than usual; passing on till I had gained the last extremity of the strand. Here, being a little out of ken, I stood and contemplated the surrounding scenery. The majesty and solemnity of the landscape inspired me with a kind of awe, while various distant objects assumed a disconsolate air, in perfect unison with the gravity of my feelings. I viewed the encircling waters, fatal bar, alas! to my happiness; surveyed the face of the country, beheld the harbor of Boston, and saw the lands lying at rest, as it seemed, beyond the ocean. The prospect before me excited ideas, by no means consolatory; yet would have been undoubtedly delightful, I imagine, to an uninterested spectator. While in this melancholy frame, I observed a quantity of eel grass (no unusual sight in this place) floating in the neighborhood of the shore. A thought now struck my mind, that, peradventure, I might, conveniently, enclose my head in this grass, and, by swimming over the river, make a happy escape.

By heaven, I'll effect this, articulated I, audibly, or perish in the attempt. O freedom! ever grateful, ever dear and valuable to the human breast, what will man not adventure in pursuit of thee! Should even seas, then, much less paltry rivers form obstructions to thy purchase! The pleasing conception of regaining liberty, had filled my imagination with such animating prospects, that, spurning to reflect on seeming difficulties, I caught a billet of wood, wrapped my head in a tuft of grass, and committed myself instantly to the swelling billows. My progress was slow, but so well timed, that, sure as a *gun*, I had escaped question, if an ill occurrence had not obtruded at this critical crisis. A certain soldier, from his watchtower, happened to espy the bunch of grass floating at a distance in the stream; he, at first, accidentally kept his eye upon it, and found that it progressed in a direction contrary to the current. This was a phenomenon, and naturally created suspicions, where every motion was watched, that some of the prisoners were effecting an escape. Accordingly, several of the soldiers jumped into a jolly boat, and rowed off to unravel the curious mystery. I saw them approaching, and at sight thereof was, literally, in a sea of perplexity; yet I lay still as a mouse in a cheese. They were alongside of me in a trice; unhooded their poor prisoner, and took me into the boat. What could I do, or say? Of a truth, vexed and confounded, as I was, I remained mute as a fish, while they were very merry, on seeing me, sleek as a half drowned rat, and

shivering with the cold. In this disorder, I was hurried before Maj. Perkins, who bequeathed me a most piping lecture, swearing, that if ever I attempted another elopement, I should be strung up without remedy. The foregoing accident discouraged me entirely, from all further thoughts of escape, till good providence should provide some safer channel of deliverance. . . .

A number of my fellow prisoners were flashmen, (as they termed themselves) an appellation appropriate to such rogues and sharpers, as make exclusive use of the flash lingo. This is partly English and party an arbitrary gibberish, which, when spoken, presents to such hearers, as are not initiated into its mysteries, a mere unintelligible jargon, but in the flash fraternity is, peculiarly, significant. As I have once made mention of the above language, and learned the use of it while at the castle, I here subjoin a specimen of sundry fashionable words and phrases of that infernal dialect. It was imported in gross from Europe, and no part of it, to my knowledge, has been hitherto communicated to the public.

Nomenclature of the Flash Language.

A cove, signifies . . . . . a man
Flat . . . . . a foolish man
Kinchen . . . . . a child
Mitre . . . . . a hat
Long tog . . . . . a coat
Jarvel . . . . . a jacket
Kickses . . . . . breeches
Leg bags . . . . . stockings

Crab . . . . . a shoe
Quillpipes . . . . . boots
Smish . . . . . a shirt
Clout . . . . . a handkerchief
Trick . . . . . a watch
Chiv . . . . . a knife
Pops . . . . . pistols
Chant . . . . . writing of any kind
Briar . . . . . a saw
Wibble . . . . . an auger
Gentleman . . . . . a crow bar
Spiker . . . . . a nail
Flamer . . . . . vitriol
Roram . . . . . the sun
Oliver . . . . . the moon
Glins . . . . . the stars
Darky . . . . . cloudy
Dinge . . . . . a dark night
Dingy cove . . . . . a negro man
Dub . . . . . a false key
Jigger . . . . . a door
Qua . . . . . a jail
Qua keeper . . . . . a jail keeper
Drag . . . . . a prisoner
Slangs . . . . . irons or handcuffs
Nipping jig . . . . . a gallows
Topt . . . . . hanged
Teasing . . . . . whipping
Prad . . . . . a horse
Spread . . . . . a saddle
Pradholder . . . . . a bridle
Hookses . . . . . (neat) cattle
Lour . . . . . money
Suck . . . . . rum

Kin . . . . . a stone
Snuskin . . . . . a bed
Quid . . . . . a guinea
Wheel . . . . . a dollar
Hog . . . . . a pistareen
Grub . . . . . victuals
Yapster . . . . . a dog
Thumpkin . . . . . a barn of hay
Glaze . . . . . a square of glass
Rum cove . . . . . a gentleman
Quisby cove . . . . . a mean fellow
Rum blowen . . . . . a gentlewoman
Quisby gorge . . . . . a mean (dirty) fellow
Napping his bib . . . . . crying
To star a glaze . . . . . to cut out a square of glass
Undub the jigger . . . . . unlock the door
Undub the qua . . . . . unlock the jail
Crack the qua . . . . . break the jail
To crack a crabkin . . . . . to break a shoemaker's shop
Douse the glin . . . . . put out the light
Petre yourself . . . . (a watchword) take care of yourself
You're spotted . . . . . you are like to be found out
I'm hammers to ye . . . . . I know what you mean
I'm dead up to the cove . . . . . I know the man well
A horney's a coming . . . . . a sheriff is coming
He's going to the nipping jig to be topt
He is going to the gallows to be hanged
To scrag a lay . . . . . to take clothes from the hedges
To go upon the bonny lay . . to undertake highway robbery
Evening sneek, going into a house by night the doors being open
Water sneak . . . . . breaking into a vessel
Touching a cly . . . . . robbing a pocket
To do him of his blowen . . . . . to rob him of his wife
Prad napping . . . . . horse stealing

From this sample it may appear, that nouns and principal verbs, as being the more important words in a sentence, are generally flashified; while pronouns, auxiliary verbs and abbreviations retain their English uniform; so that the flash tongue is nothing else than a mixture of English, with other words, fabricated designedly for the purposes of deception; it can be useful to rogues and sharpers only. I once acquired such a facility in this dialect, as to converse in it with much the same ease as in plain English, although now I have lost its familiar use. But no more of this futile language; may it return to Europe, where it received its misshapen birth.*

* This may be one of the earliest vocabularies of slang published in this country. The words, as Tufts says, are English in origin. His remark that they were "imported in gross" from Europe almost seems a punning acknowledgement to Francis Grose's *Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*. But I do not find that they are taken verbatim from any edition of Grose available to me.—*E.P.*

Chapter V

THE ROAD AGAIN

The castle is (prime truth to tell)
A little Tartarus or h-ll,
And its inhabitants, past doubt,
Are allied to th' infernal scout;
Troth, 'twas a scurvy hit to be
Condemn'd to this black company.
I've pac'd the town and country through,
Yet never met so d-n'd a crew.

◆ ◆ ◆ WHENEVER my reflections led to the subject, much would I regret the happiness of those delightful times, when I was at liberty to rove from place to place, and from clime to clime; an employment always congenial to my dearest wishes. Much too, did I regret my late loved mistress, in whose company I had seen so many agreeable hours; a mental comparison of which, with my present infelicities, led me into the subsequent train of reflections, which I have here thrown into a kind of verse; for the insertion of which, I must, again, entreat the pardon of good natured critics.

What doleful scenes are here, compar'd with those
Which lately to my pleasing vision rose,
When Happiness, bright goddess, by her power,
Lull'd all my cares to rest and sooth'd each hour.

> In converse sweet, with my lov'd female friend,
> Contentment mild, did all my steps attend,
> While former sorrows lost their wonted sway
> In the soft pleasures of each blissful day. . . .

Though, while a prisoner, I was unprepared to solve the above queries; yet I may now reply to them without conjectural embarrassment. For having spoken of the manner of living at the castle, and related the more material occurrences befalling me there, I must, to avoid repetition, pass over many matters analogous to those already noticed, and proceed to observe, that my detestable servitude continued, without intermission, five years in the whole, which brought the autumn of 1798. That tedious space having elapsed, a lucky event took place, which paved the way for my deliverance, as well as that of the other prisoners, more effectually, than could have any scheme within the breach of our sagacity. The event was this; the commonwealth of Massachusetts ceded the castle, with its dependencies, to the government of the United States, on which transaction it was predicated, that the removal of the convicts from the island would be a necessary consequence.

Tidings of this favorable event being circulated among the prisoners, joy sparkled in every eye, and transport filled each bosom. For my own part, I now calculated upon a restoration to freedom, as a real certainty, and fondly anticipated the beatitudes of future ease and repose.

Not many days intervened, before my expectations were, in good measure, realized, by the actual arrival of an order for our removal hence, and circular distribution in the common prisons. It was my lot to be carried and shut up, with five or six other of our worthies, in Salem jail; but in this receptacle I had no intention of abiding long, since, in my present idea of things, I had suffered already a competency of evils to satisfy vengeance, the most inexorable, and for imputed crimes, of which I had been in no wise culpable.

While meditating on the best means of escape, I was visited by the jailor, removed by his injunctions into an upper apartment, and there secured till further orders. On taking leave, he vouchsafed to observe, that the room was in a slender predicament, wherefore, I must behave peaceably, if I intended to tarry long. I made no reply, but thought the hint a plain indication of his wishes to be well rid of his visitants. So, losing no time, I examined the limits of my cell, and presently discovered several pieces of movable timber. It was then about the middle of the afternoon, but scarce had twilight discolored the face of things, ere I fell to work, and, in half an hour, opened a sufficient breach. This done, I clambered over into the entry, and, in the next minute, gained the open street; but whether my fellow-prisoners were apprised of my attempt, I cannot determine.

Thus, after a series of years, and a multiplicity of inquietudes, did I find myself at full liberty to order my

conduct, as suited the volitions of my own mind, a privilege unpossessed of a long time. Near the confines of the prison I made a halt, to recover respiration, and to consider of my better course. My hesitation was indeed momentary, for tickling desire soon turned my steps toward Lee and Greenland, to visit my primitive friends; but, above all, my old companion Nabby, who now engaged my concern, and who abode, as I presumed, in the Town last mentioned.

Thus I set forward musing as I went, upon the versatility of human affairs, and upon the strange alternation of events, which had checkered, so surprisingly, my late untoward fate. I now revolved in idea, how I had been abused and persecuted for the last six years; torn from social enjoyments, and sentenced to finish my destiny by a halter, but, at length, exempted from that penalty, by being doomed to eke out a wretched existence in the exilement of the Castle; and lastly, in what manner, by a sudden transition, as though fortune had been weary of her malignant exertions, I was now cast pennyless into the wide world, and left to shift, as I could, for my own support and well being.

It was near the close of the month of October and the night serenely cold, when I thus commenced my extraordinary journey toward Lee; my apparel was composed of hair and tow, extremely thin and much tattered. Thus poorly accommodated I began to feel, ere marching a mile, the stinging effects of the frigid air; but seeing no

remedy for the evil put the best foot forward till I reached Haverhill ferry. Here I found it impossible to pass over without the ferryman's assistance; but, alas! for fear of detention I dared not awake him. Shivering with cold therefore, as an aspen leaf with the wind, I veered to the left, and traveled upstream two miles to Ox Ferry, where finding an old leaky canoe, I ventured to cross over in that flimsy vehicle. Still, I had other difficulties to surmount, for, by the time I had gained the opposite shore my limbs were quite torpid from the keenness of the nocturnal air. Not daring to enter the abode of man I set off in quest of some barn or other retreat where, to prevent perishing, I might roll up in some kennel of a litter of hay until morning. Luckily, within the limits of a mile I found a berth to my liking, so creeping into a hay mow my senses were quickly dispatched to the regions of forgetfulness, and I obtained in sleep a few hours of undisturbed, exhilarating repose.

Awaking late in the morning I sprang up and jogged onward, till feeling weak and faint for want of nutriment, I ventured into a mean looking house, and obtained of a poor woman a slender repast, being the utmost her penury could afford. This friendly bounty enabled me to reach Exeter, which I entered about dark, and procured supper at the house of an old and approved friend.

While here at my ease and dreaming of no harm to be sure, a report was circulated of my being in the town, and not only so, but a dozen or more people were col-

lected to seize my person as a deserter from confinement. Their design was well meant and cunningly devised, yet I discovered it just in season to give them the slip by a speedy decampment. This flurry over, I pressed onward and made out to reach Lee the same evening though at a very late hour.

As I had too much pride to appear publicly in the garb of a tatterdemallion, as was my present condition, and besides, was very doubtful what kind of reception I should meet with among the wary inhabitants of the place, it seemed most prudent to keep close for a season. Accordingly I took private lodgings at my elder brother's house and there gained a particular account of the removal of my first wife and several of my children from Lee to Lemington,* in the District of Maine, in which town my sons owned land and now lived in credible circumstances. This news surprised me greatly, being the first hint I had received of the affair. If such be the case, thought I, soon shall I bid adieu to Lee forever!

While in my present asylum many favors were shown me; my brother, in particular, gave me a fraternal welcome and contributed liberally in mitigation of my wants. I likewise saw and conversed with a number of my quondam friends who generously supplied me with some of the most necessary articles for my situation. By their help I was in trim to exhibit a more decent appearance

* Limington is the present spelling. Maine, at this time a part of Massachusetts, became a separate State in 1820.—*E.P.*

and in compliance with their kind invitations, visited each at his own house, where I was received as one risen from the dead.

For upwards of ten years, next preceding the present visit, I had been an alien from Lee without once seeing the place; consequently the manners of the people as well as the appearance of things had sustained great alterations. My old adversaries had pretty much forgotten our former bickerings and their own resentments. They now seemed inclinable to assist rather than insult me, thinking perhaps, I had paid the full price of my former transgressions.

Tarrying some time at Lee and finding that none were desirous to give me the smallest disturbance I repaired to Newmarket and was received with much philanthropy by the people of that town. On hearing my story they strongly advised my repairing to Lemington to see my children who had gone thither, and who, they said, were well settled and in such good circumstances that doubtless they would assist me after the sad vexations I had met with in life. I thought well of their augury but my mind was wavering, for my esteemed Nabby, like a powerful magnet, drew me toward herself with a potency I scarce knew how to resist. However, on sober reflection I thought to pursue the advice of my friends and stay at Lemington the approaching winter should my boys be inclined to show me a cordial welcome. Promotive of this resolution some alterations had taken place in respect

of my dear companion, the long lost Abigail, which I shall here relate. To do this I must recur to the period of my confinement at the Castle for the sake of observing that she, as a faithful sharer in my ill as well as good fortune, had lingered in and about Boston and the neighboring towns for several years in hopes of my dismission, or perhaps, escape. But at length growing weary of my long detention and hearing it said that not the least probability existed of my future enlargement, and being also in no condition to support herself and children any longer in Boston, she concluded to return to Greenland and throw herself and family (now four in number) upon the indulgence of her friends. This plan was carried into effect a few months prior to my unlooked-for release, and she continued with her relatives and friends in Greenland till visited by her own brother whose place of abode was at Rockingham in Vermont. At his pressing request she removed to his habitation where, at the time of my castle-deliverance, she still resided.

As I wished to have seen and conversed with her prior to my departure her absence was a subject of no small anxiety; but at last, having found an opportunity to send her a letter by way of the Post I adjusted all affairs and set out directly on my journey for Lemington.

It was about the beginning of December when I had the pleasure to set foot, for the first time, within the house of my son Simeon in that town. I found him, as also my son-in-law and their families, with my old wife

Lydia, and our youngest child, all in good health. Our other children had been put out apprentices, and were all provided with suitable places of abode. To my entire satisfaction I now saw that though report was prone to exaggerate, yet, in the instance respecting my two sons, it had made no undue representation of their prosperity for each of them possessed a well managed farm and lived in rural affluency. They received me with cordiality and showed me the kindest attention. I felt both delight at the generous treatment I received and happiness at the prosperous establishment of my children; yet, even here fate had reserved for me conflicts of a trying nature; a struggle, however, bearing little affinity with any of anterior origin. It concerned my old wife Lydia and my young (reputed) wife Abigail: and the difficulty was, with whom of the two I should cohabit in future. This mental embarrassment was owing to my children residing at Lemington, who, since my return had been anxious, pressingly so, that I should forsake my mistress entirely and cleave thenceforth to the wife of my youth, my only lawful one, as they rightfully described her. I hesitated, but to carry their point they added to persuasion many alluring offers of assistance and, Heaven knows, I much needed at that time both succor and encouragement from some quarter or other.

Five disastrous years I had spent at the Castle without earning a penny for myself since all I could there rake and scrape had been scarce sufficient to bar a divorce of

soul from body. What measures then could I now adopt, exonerated as I was of all earthly advantages? After many reflections upon the advice of my two sons and weighing the pros and cons demurely in the balance of fair reasoning; in the course of which I calculated honestly on my present situation; that I had reached actually the decline of life, being in the fifty-second year of my age, with my corporeal vigor and mental powers perceptibly abated; that I felt poorly able to prosecute such fatiguing marches or to encounter such extreme hardships as had been those of former endurance; that no other means were visible of pushing my future fortune through the world except those I had heretofore practiced; meager penury in the meantime staring me full in the face; I say, after these and various other reflections, I even coincided with little self-satisfaction, to forego all future connection with my dear mistress should the step be compatible with my former promises. On the other hand it touched me to the quick to think of quitting the woman who had followed my fortunes hither and thither, through evil and good, and who had attended me so kindly in my greatest afflictions both of body and mind, cheerfully supplying my wants to the extent of her ability when I was deserted by every other person; not to mention that I had four children by her already and loved her unquestionably beyond all other women upon earth. Ah, me! what a stint was it to control my passions on the present occasion? Yet, having once concluded to listen to the re-

monstrances of my wife, children and friends, and to effect, if it could be, a separation from the woman of my heart, I lost no time but wrote her a line fully expressive of my sincere love and regard and grateful acknowledgments for all kindnesses I had received; stating the reasons however, why I supposed our separation unavoidable and concluding with my best wishes for her perpetual happiness. This billet I found means to convey; and not long after received an answer in which she appeared not insensible of my ingratitude, but, nevertheless spoke of a separation as a point settled and unalterable.

Never since have I had the privilege of seeing her, but although cruel fate has decreed our separation I shall ever feel a tender affection for her person, and a lively sense of gratitude for the benefits she once had the goodness to render me. Those benefits are enhanced a thousandfold from the consideration that I received them when struggling with woes too weighty, in a manner, for the endurance of humanity.

I understand she has been wedded some few years to a respectable man and is now living in the interior of the country, where she enjoys the comforts of life but without its luxuries. Sincerely I pray that during life's remainder she may reap much more happiness with her present husband than possibly could have fallen to her share in my company or keeping.

Having adjusted in the manner above recited the foregoing troublesome affairs, I took quiet seizen, and, turf

and twig, possession of my primitive wife as of fee, and we resided together as baron and feme at Lemington, aforesaid. Our issue had been nine in number, most of whom were as yet living. We considered them as the pledges of our former love and notwithstanding the frequent desertions and numberless matrimonial infidelities of which I was chargeable, we contrived to dwell together in tolerable harmony. Indeed, my old wife was mistress of several convenient though rare qualities, one of which was she had a knack at dispensing with some of my irregularities which a more squeamish stomach had not digested so easily. To this might be added that she was a very notable and discreet housewife, so that never was her person in the least degree burdensome or expensive to me; but, on the reverse she had contributed to the support of the family more than I myself had, or in my embarrassed circumstances could ever have been able.

As it was my allotment to settle permanently in Lemington I purchased a piece of land and by the help of indulgent friends erected thereon a small but commodious dwelling-house. In this situation I led a peaceable and harmless life, my time being spent either in clearing land or in marching to and fro in quality of Indian Doctor. Meantime I had leisure and opportunity to ruminate upon the multiplicity of horrible ills and almost unparalleled sufferings that former misdeeds, especially the depredations I had made upon the property of others, had drawn on my devoted head. In brief, it now appeared

on review that I had substantial reason to abominate theft to the latest hour of existence; wherefore I was led to resolve seriously that no temptations in future should induce a renewal of such shameful enormities. And really, in respect to theft itself, I have ever since observed most religiously the determination I adopted at that period; since, from the day I received sentence of death to the present moment of recording the fact I have never taken clandestinely from man, woman or child to the amount of a single pin.

As our little household consisted at present of only my old wife, myself and youngest child, I found that it transcended in no wise my honest endeavors to support it decently; this encouraged me to persevere in well-doing. In fact I derived no slender advantage from my constant exertions in the medical line, my travels were both east and west, and seldom did I return home unsupplied with necessaries. Besides, I frequently visited the Shakers, a society of Christians residing at Alfred, who, from the commencement of our acquaintance have been ever increasing in my veneration and esteem. With much gratitude I make mention of the charitable philanthropists in that place because, first and last, their bounty has been manifold and they have rendered me important services.

I had pursued the course of life above described perhaps a year when a certain gentleman (to call no names) having lost his horse, made a journey to Lemington and taxed me with the theft. I tried to convince him of his

mistake but in vain, for admitting none of my excuses, he advised the attendant sheriff to seize and convey me to Dover jail. Conscious of innocency in this behalf, I remonstrated on the expense and loss of time attendant on the journey; still I was willing to accompany them on condition of reimbursement if found blameless. But no! they would make no such compromise, suggesting that if I would take horses I had also stolen undoubtedly the clothes I had on (for they saw me clad in a pretty decent suit). To obviate this calumny I asserted that to the bounty of the Shakers it was owing that I could call those clothes my own. This they heard with a sarcastic sneer and in hopes of detecting my fallacy hurried me off to Alfred, where, on entering the town, we happened to meet with a party of Shakers at work on the highway. To those honest citizens the question was propounded and answer immediately returned that my suit of clothes was a voluntary gift from their own fraternity. This point cleared, the Shakers in turn demanded with some spirit whither they might be carrying me, and were told, "To Dover Jail, for horse-stealing and being a rogue." The Shakers said they had no belief of my stealing a horse and, as to being a rogue, I certainly had the looks of the honestest man of the three; being an old friend whom they would not see dragged culprit like any farther, unless sanctioned by proper authority. This prohibition nettled my conductors who, being unable to produce a shadow of legality for their arbitrary proceedings, set me

SHAKERS DANCING

at liberty and suffered me to return home. A while after the lost horse was found, so that my innocence became clear as the noonday sun, yet I have repressed the man's name who treated me thus, in the sincere hope that he will one day repent and make amends for the trouble he thus occasioned me.

The next thing exigent of mention, and consequent on my return home from Alfred, is that I received the distressing intelligence of the decease of the illustrious General Washington, that truly magnanimous patriot who had been the political savior of his country and founder of the American empire; a man more worthy of being styled "the great" than any of the Alexanders, Pompeys or Charles who ever swayed a scepter. His death took place as the world knows, on the fourteenth of December, A.D. 1799, and was universally lamented through the land of his preservation by all ranks and orders of men. As a faint eulogy on his virtues, as a small tribute of praise to his sacred memory, for the matchless services he has rendered his country and the world, I here subjoin the following stanzas on that melancholy occasion, being a transcript of those ideas which are more legibly written on the table of my heart and which, I trust, no accident will ever efface.

What dismal sounds invade the ear!
  What gloom o'erspreads the sky;
What solemn tidings do we hear!
  What piercing, heartfelt cry!

Hark! 'tis the mournful trump of fate,
"Great Washington's no more";
Freed from this fleeting, mortal state,
He seeks the heav'nly shore.

His glorious race on earth is run,
Immortal lives his fame;
Admiring worlds, O, Washington!
Shall still exalt thy name.*

* No apology is made for omitting seven stanzas.—*E.P.*

Chapter VI

PIOUS LADY PILGRIMS

Ill habits cleave like birdlime to poor man,
Stick, like contagion, shake them off who can;
What vices we imbibe in youth, behold,
Like shadows, will pursue us, when grown old.

◆ ◆ ◆ For the space of twelve months subsequent to the mournful event just related I remained firm and steady at home in pursuing my ordinary business, which generally was dealing out medicine and cultivating a small farm. Between both I had full employment and provided for my small family in a decent and comfortable manner. My fame as an Indian doctor increased daily, and to my exertions were ascribed various extraordinary cures; of this commendation indeed I rather supposed myself not absolutely undeserving. Regular physicians will naturally smile at this seeming self-sufficiency, as some even of that description are extremely fond of having all medical science exclusively confined to their own fraternity. Let them enjoy comfortably their fancied superiority, I wish neither to detract from their merits nor to overrate my own.

Being now between fifty and sixty years of age I began to think, as doubtless will others, that it was high time

to have sown my wild oats and to have shaken off my old tricks and corrupt habits, at the same time setting about a very necessary piece of business, to wit, reformation. Indeed, at the time I treat of my thoughts dwelt with unusual elasticity on the subject of a future well-being; while, too, the image of past life presented itself to view in colors the most alarming, filling me with anguish and remorse. What salutary effects had been the result of those conscientious reflections if an adventure unfriendly to morals had not caught me by surprise and suspended for a time the operation of those friendly principles which were striving, I believe, to acquire some dominion over my vices, I pretend not to say. True it is, a man of my standing, in years at least, should have been better proof against temptation such as I allude to; and with remorse should confess his weakness in tamely yielding to the assault; yet, as I have hitherto related facts without disguise I must, for uniformity's sake, continue that practice however future comments may tend to my disadvantage. Without more apology I shall relate the adventure.

A certain young woman of religious deportment, I must conceal her name, called at my house one day in the absence of my family, to borrow my horse to ride a few miles to a newlight meeting and for the favor she engaged to pay half a dollar on her return. "The horse, young woman, said I, is at your service, only the money must be paid first, for you know it is ticklish trusting these hard times." She hesitated, since, horse or no horse,

half a dollar, prompt pay, was more than she could advance. What then to do she knew not, for positively some horse she must have and none other could be obtained. Her perplexity was obvious, my inflexibility unshaken; she entreated, allured, flattered, but to little purpose; I was as prompt in refusal as she in importunity. At length to promote a compromise, I suggested that payment might be made easy, without the aid of a capital, since I was not absolutely disinclined to take personal services in lieu of all other requital. In fine, I named the conditions that should alone entitle her to the loan of the horse, though for modesty's sake I choose not to repeat them here. This was enough to excite those blushes which I then saw redden on her cheek; I, too, was preparing for the mortification of a rebuff, but the young religionist after a little hesitation and a few female negatives which often carry a far different meaning, gesticulated her assent. Articles of agreement having been fulfilled to a punctilio, she mounted her steed with agility and rode away with the air and gravity of a vestal of threescore. The above instance may be compared not inappositely to Ovid's recontre with Corinna, and is a pregnant proof that like him I had not mastered sufficiently my juvenile eccentricities. It may also evince the great difficulty of overcoming iniquity when long familiarized to the practice of it or of resisting temptation when she presents herself in alluring points of view.

Not many days transpired after the above ungracious

behavior ere I equipped myself *cap a pie,* mounted my stout horse and set off on a medical excursion toward Nova Scotia. The whole of this extensive jaunt was crowned with brilliant success. I perceived as I passed along, that the face of the country had undergone great changes and had become much more populous than when I saw it last. Though, as many of the settlers were emigrants from New Hampshire and the northeasterly parts of old Massachusetts, where I had frequently rendezvoused, my looks were generally distinguished wherever I set foot. For that reason I dared not borrow such a strange diversity of antic shapes as Proteus like, I formerly did when strolling through these regions. Of a truth I was forced to relinquish both preaching and praying; and as for theft, I considered that as a reprobated resource which I had solemnly renounced forever. Hence the only surviving hobbyhorses within my circumscribed fee, were doctoring and fortune telling; but on either of those, alternately, I could traverse with eclat the highway of life without being pestered with the fears of want or the sighs of ambition. . . . [Tufts now hears of the death of his old friend, Richard Dennis, drowned while escaping from officers of the law.]

On my way homeward I visited the Shakers of Alfred, and that friendly people did not suffer me to leave them without fresh samples of their munificence. I have cause to esteem them, and shall, till life ceases to vibrate. How different has been their conduct toward me when de-

pressed by poverty from that which some other religious professors have manifested when in much worse circumstances; professors who, under the mask and garb of sanctity are ever seeking to defraud their neighbors, and grind the face of the poor; hypocrites, impostors, and wholly unworthy the name they feloniously usurp.

Though disposed to declaim thus against zeal and sanctified hypocrisy I still retain a peculiar veneration for the sincerely pious, whom I esteem as the salt of the earth and the brightest ornaments of society. Godly piety is indeed a sublime qualification and the first, best source of human felicity.

> Ah blest religion pure and undefil'd!
> Thy pleasing theme imparts serene delight,
> Transforms to hope the fears of misery's child,
> And to the poor dispenses heavenly light.

But to proceed. Leaving the Shakers I posted home but was there incommoded by means of sundry people who were searching for one of my castle comrades, who, forgetful of former calamities, had stolen a valuable horse. The aggressor had, indeed, been under my protection for upwards of four months and for his personal security while with me I stood sponsor; for which reason I was the more anxious to facilitate his flight. I succeeded in my trust and it being my friend's intention to abandon our quarter forever, by way of requital he gave me not only his stolen horse but several notes of hand against responsible persons residing at Waterborough. The horse I

turned to good advantage and was so lucky as to collect the whole amount of the notes; so that I cleared, through the misfortunes of this man, to the tune, at least of three hundred dollars.

I was now enabled to discharge every debt I owed with honor and punctuality and to lay out for a more decent and advantageous mode of living than heretofore. Every undertaking seemed to be prospered under my hands; when suddenly a new disaster dispelled all hopeful prospects and gave me fresh proofs of the instability of human prosperity. Being one day on a small journey I received a desperate fall from an unruly horse by which I broke an arm and a rib and dislocated my wrist. Several months I was confined with this tremendous visitation ere returning health permitted a resumption of customary employments. At length, however, I got the better of all complaints and set my face toward the north, resolving, if health continued, to perform a tour of some considerable length. With this view I set off with my baggage, assuming, uniformly, the port and dignity of an old sage physician of long practice and experience. In the course of my rambles I went to the White Hills, sometimes called the "Lady Mountains," where, among other curiosities, I had a sight of the huge stone that rolled spontaneously down those hills in the year (if I mistake not) 1798. In size it was large as an ordinary meeting house; it took its departure from near the summit of one of those mountains and continued its progressive descent

as much as three-fourths of a mile, until a deep valley arrested its further progress. The path cleared in the journey of this stupendous rock appeared to be four rods in width and was swept quite clean of every standing tree, great and small. The inhabitants of the adjacent country for several leagues round heard the noise of the descending mass for nearly, as it seemed, a quarter of an hour, and conceived it the report of a great earthquake.

Leaving these mountains, I touched at many other places. Having, at last, indulged my desire for traveling I arrived at Lemington in perfect safety. The spring of 1802 had already advanced, so that my agricultural affairs requiring immediate attention I applied to them for a season with much diligence; but no sooner did circumstances permit than I set off again toward the east and after rambling some time, in another of her frolicsome moods dame Fortune conducted me to Old Wells. Here by mere accident I came across a brisk young widow, one whose person was faultless, her smiles bewitching, and her worldly goods far from inconsiderable. I perceived she had no knowledge of my person, so without demur I invoked the little mischievous deity and had the pleasure of a most gracious reception. Our courtship equalled in duration Jonah's continuance in the whale's belly, that is, three days and nights; the whole of which time passed so pleasantly that I never shall expect hereafter "to forget the widow." It should also be noted that our union in marriage was fully agreed on, three months after that be-

ing mentioned for its real solemnization. Sooner she could not be ready as her wedding suit and many other preparative articles must first be provided. Thus I studied and practiced deception till my visit was eked out to a critical length, when I reluctantly quitted the fields of delight by bidding farewell to the enraptured widow.

Leaving Wells, I hied to Portland, then passed on to Alfred and other unimportant places; but lastly returned to Lemington, my thoughts still running incessantly upon the beautiful widow. The above stipulated term sped away; yet I neglected to return equipped for the matrimonial voyage as the pleasing dreams of my bride elect had fondly anticipated; wherefore, being in a nettle, she inquired out the place of my abode and dispatched a man and horse to know the cause of my absence. The messenger came to Lemington, where, hearing of my family connections he neglected the delivery of his message and posted back with the ugly intelligence that I was a married man already. How the poor widow digested the bitter pill I had little privilege of knowing; I knew, however, that very possibly this wild adventure might be productive of some perverse consequences, I therefore forsook home and journeyed a round pace toward Connecticut. In my travels this route I passed through Ipswich, where I saw a number of my old female friends, the sight of whom brought to my remembrance afresh the numerous benefactions conferred upon me in

the worst of times by the ladies of that town. It recurred to mind in what manner they had petitioned for my release when suffering in prison under bonds and condemnation, and surrounded with all the terrors, all the machinery of death.

Chapter VII

A YOUNG LADY OF MAINE

When wanton women guide the helm,
No wonder surges overwhelm
The crazy bark, a shatter'd wreck,
Its lading tost from hold and deck.

FROM Ipswich I shaped my course northwardly and after a short residence in different places, returned home. I was soon after requested to visit in a medical capacity, a sick young woman, then in the eighteenth year of her age; but whose name, because of the recency of the transactions connected with this, I choose to repress.

She was the daughter of a neighboring farmer and had been, of a long time, in a weak and languishing condition; so much so that it was verily supposed her malady would terminate in a consumption and thus end her days. She had sought relief both far and near and had tried many prescriptions to no kind of purpose; for, in spite of remedies her disorder continued to gain ground and she proportionably to decline. In this state I found her almost emaciated to a skeleton. It was obvious to every one that her situation must be extremely precarious and her recovery to health altogether problematical, yet at the earnest

desire of her friends I undertook the unpromising task of prescribing for her cure.

As my private opinion had been opposed ever to the ordinary use of apothecary's drugs and chemical medicines which, being the growth chiefly of foreign climates, different from and perhaps more unhealthy than our own, I considered less congenial to American constitutions than medicines, the production of our own soil; I therefore, confined my patient entirely to the use of the latter. My remedies were vegetable and simples, and I had the vanity to suppose that my long intercourse with the Indian doctors and frequent practice even since, had taught me to apply them with becoming dexterity. And as the complaints of my patient were similar to those from which the Indians had formerly relieved me, I chose to rely in her case upon the methods of cure prescribed by the Indian physicians in mine. Whether my judgment were correct or not it ill behooves me to say, yet true it is that my choice of means was surprisingly successful, even beyond my greatest expectations. After several visits the poor invalid began to show symptoms of amendment and in a few months more regained as complete a state of health as she had ever been known to enjoy.

During the progress of her cure I had paid the most diligent attendance upon her person, administering many of the medicines with my own hands, by which, and other assiduities, I ingratiated myself insensibly (though God knows undesignedly) into her good graces and made

no slight impression on her heart. This discovery, though unnoticed by the rest of the family, was by me most easily observed, as every word and gesture which escaped contributed to its confirmation. My surmises, however, were confined to my own breast, not even to her did I betray this knowledge for I wished on family accounts that the fatal flame which seemed to be kindling in her bosom might expire in embryo. To promote so laudable an end I relinquished the pleasure of visiting at her father's house and studiously avoided all possible occasions of personal intercourse. This was my expedient for a while, till one day, happening to be caught in her company, she made use of the opportunity to acquaint me in plain terms, with her sentiments and the situation of her mind. The subject was introduced by expressing her great satisfaction at the unexpected recovery of her health; she then proceeded to thank me in pathetic terms for the useful services I had rendered her. Under providence she ascribed it to my care and attention wholly, that she was yet in the land of the living and in a situation to express her gratitude for the amazing pains I had taken on her account, averring it impossible to reward me in a way adequate to her wishes or my deserts. I assured her that my recompense was already ample from the pleasure I took in having promoted her welfare; that therefore I must reject the idea of all further compensation. "Never, (rejoined she) can my greatest benefactor be repaid; the best, the only requital I can make you for saving my life

is to declare you welcome to the last little of my property; and greatly should I rejoice if the poor bequest were increased a hundredfold. Yes, Mr. Tufts, to speak ingenuously, in nothing could I receive so much satisfaction, such peculiar delight, as in devoting my all to your only service." "I thank you kindly, dearest miss, said I for this pleasing testimony of your gratitude, but permit me to repeat that I am thoroughly satisfied; that I wish no other requital than what I have already received: Yes, Madam! I feel myself richly rewarded for the too trivial pains I have taken and therefore entreat you that all further observations may be waved on the subject." Here our conversation paused for a moment but was quickly renewed by her wishing, though in faltering accents, that I might not be amazed at her singular discourse since she loved and esteemed me beyond all others on earth. I replied that her declaration would have been more particularly transporting but for the chilling reflection that I was already bound in the matrimonial chain, which she certainly knew, and therefore in no situation to enjoy the benefits of her partiality. Here repressing the rising sigh, she proceeded to observe that her happiness would be superlative were she permitted to abandon all and follow my fortune to some remote quarter where we might contribute to the lasting felicity of each other. This declaration demonstrated so great a degree of ardor that it instantly excited mine; indeed I had quite forgotten my former resolution to forsake the

company of this bewitching girl, I therefore told her that in case she was sincere I would undertake to escort her far from the reach of those who might wish to annoy us, and would be careful to supply her with all the comforts, not elegancies, of life. She appeared to be mightily pleased with this declaration and promised with alacrity to be ready for removal at a moment's warning. I observed that the exact time of departure must be a matter of uncertainty, depending entirely upon contingencies, since much must necessarily be done previous to leaving the town and that with much privacy; but that I would immediately return home and with all diligence make the requisite arrangements and, when the fortunate moment arrived, would acquaint her with my whole scheme. I desired her by all means to be in momentary preparation as the least delay might possibly discomfit the whole important design. Assuring me most solemnly that there should be no kind of failure on her part I took reluctant leave of my lovely charmer for that time. I would beg permission to note in this place that, however singular it may seem for one of the fair sex to make the declarations and overtures above related to a man advanced, with my accustomed veracity I must declare that I have preserved not only the sense but the spirit of the original dialogue as nearly as my recollection would enable me.

I hasten to observe that my late extraordinary engagements were continually uppermost in my fancy, impatiently urging me to the possession of my new mistress,

who, though no beauty, was yet endued with those attractive qualities which rendered her peculiarly an object of desire. The better to provide for traveling expenses therefore, I immediately converted into money such of my effects as might be disposed of with secrecy. I then settled my other business and feeling much anxiety to elope, notified my little mistress in what place to meet me. She was punctual; we both gained the angle of taction without exciting the least suspicion among the people of the neighborhood. As it fell out I was provided with a horse, able-bodied and an excellent traveler, we therefore mounted conjunctly, took the road to Kennebec and without regret bade adieu to Lemington, though we wist not but forever.

The first thirty-six hours were spent in traveling, both night and day, with the greatest expedition. Sometimes I marched on foot, sometimes proceeded on horseback, continually agitated, however, for fear of some disaster. Many times did we cast fearful glances behind lest we should behold a group of pursuers in the rear, but our alarms were groundless, the fact being that nobody had attempted as yet to trace out our footsteps.

By this time we were more than one hundred and twenty miles from the place of departure but so vastly fatigued that it was impossible to proceed an inch further for the present. We alighted at a house to gain some refreshment, when thinking ourselves quite out of danger

we concluded to tarry the remainder of the day and the night ensuing.

The good folks of the house being informed that we were man and wife supplied us with a single bed only; this omission, however, gave us no umbrage in the least, on the contrary we took possession of our new lodging with the same regularity as though this habit had existed for years.

Over the transporting scene which naturally took place between me and my pleasing bedfellow during this first trial of our amorous skill I shall draw an impenetrable veil, and pass on to mention that the next day we prosecuted our journey, as we did the day following, without the slightest cross accident on the road, but on the afternoon of the third day we happened to be overtaken by a well looking traveler on horseback. At this moment I was walking with a view to ease my horse, so that my progression could be none of the swiftest, nevertheless the man unknown, as if fond of company, slackened his pace and vouchsafed for several miles together to amuse my companion and me with his facetious conversation. This brought us to a place called the six mile woods, just in the borders of which we met several people, one of whom was going to advise with a certain doctor upon the case of a man who lay ill at some distance. I halted to confer with the strangers, but my girl and our fellow-passenger moved moderately on.

The road through the woods, being straight, was per-

fectly visible for a great way ahead, and while I was busied in discourse, my mistress and man had proceeded nearly a mile, appearing however to have then quickened their pace. I felt uneasy at this circumstance, so that, giving the travelers the best of my counsel for the sick man, I bid them God speed and hastened to overtake my company.

Inasmuch as my sweeting was now alone in the wood, with an utter stranger, it is not unreasonable to suppose that I placed the best foot forward, this in fact I did but after a deal of hurry, caught not a glimpse of the runaways till I had traversed nearly the whole extent of the forest. But when I had done this I again stretched my visual orbs ahead and happened to espy them aloof in the very suspicious act of remounting their horses.

Judge now, you husbands and lovers! for you alone will be able, what were my sensations and what my astonishment when I detected my beloved mistress in the strange attitude above mentioned! Her conduct, unless viewed in the worst light, appeared utterly insoluble! What honest inducement could she have had, reasoned I, for dismounting in this dreary forest with an absolute stranger! None decidedly! Vexed with those ideas I quickened my pace and at last overtook the fugitives near the outskirts of the wood just as they reached the tavern of one Stevens, in the town of Sebesticot.

As the demon jealousy had taken hold of my imagination and fired it with indignant rage, I wished to de-

velop more fully the supposed treachery of my mistress in order to requite her accordingly. But the case requiring brevity I could think of nothing else in my agitation than to charge the culprits with the fact and then draw conclusions from the effects of the accusation upon their countenances at the moment of surprise. I had scarcely adopted this expedient but an opportunity offered to put it partially in practice, for the landlord, coming out, stepped up to my mistress' gallant, just as she was entering the doors and greeting him kindly, asked us both into the house. In an angry tone I assured the landlord I should never associate with a man who had injured me so basely as had the fellow before us, at the same time I made enquiry for a Magistrate to whom I might resort for some kind of recompense. As I uttered this I kept a watchful eye upon the supposed culprit and discerned in his aspect both guilt and fear depicted in colors too visible for misconception. His confusion was proof enough though extorted by surprise that my suspicions were well founded. Vexation and grief at the thoughts of my girl's perfidy as may be well supposed, diffused painful emotions through the inner recesses of my heart. The fellow believed her to be, ipso facto, my wife, so that dreading my displeasure, he declined entering the house, but, watching out motions, sneaked away unperceived, so that I never set eyes on him more. The dastardly conduct of this fellow led me to reflect upon the humiliating nature of guilt, how it disarms the hero, debases the

man, and inspires the wretch, its possessor, with the weakness of cowardice and evasion.

Tarrying an hour at the Tavern for the benefit of refreshment, our journey was renewed; but the moment myself and trull were clearly out of earshot, I began a grating lecture on the score of her perfidy, more especially to a man who had relinquished house and home for her sake. However, she set up a defense, just such a one, indeed, as might be expected from such a woman; it being a denial, in toto, of the facts. I assured her that evasions would be useless since her gallant had disclosed all, but that, still, I was willing to forgive her if she would acknowledge the fault and do so no more. This I told her was my ultimatum, for on no other footing could I ever restore her to favor. Our debate was long, and many were the tears that descended from her eyes, till finding my resolution firm to abandon her unless she made the concession required and, supposing too that her partner in guilt had betrayed all, she at length confessed her misconduct, yet sought to palliate it by saying she had opposed his desires to the bat's end, till overcome by force and pecuniary allurements. "But now, cried she, I am convinced of my error and suffer as you must need suppose, the severest compunction." I intend to be as good as my promise, interrupted I, and shall, for this once, overlook all, though if henceforth you give me the least room to scruple your fidelity, believe it a fact at that moment I renounce you forever.

Such were my denunciations and such my real intentions, while in return the young minx promised the best fashions in future; thus terminated for the present our unpleasing altercation. My mind, however, was ill at ease, for, previous to this shock, I intended to have sought some commodious retreat in which to have spent with her the remainder of my days.

We now pursued the journey in apparent good friendship and our next port was Wiscasset. Here I visited several sick people, but, feeling anxious to pursue our flight, went on to Penobscot. In this place I continued dealing out medicines for perhaps a week, when news being carried to Doctor Thomas, the practicing physician in those parts, that I was busy among his customers, he became highly exasperated. I happened to meet him one day in company with several gentlemen when he rebuked me sharply for my meddlesome officiousness as he termed it; a smart altercation ensued principally upon medical subjects but its issue was very little to the Doctor's credit or advantage.

Quitting Penobscot, our next stage was to Sandy River, in Farmington. Here we took lodgings with my cousin Elder Tufts, a lay-preacher. This man of zeal, observing that a she animal formed part of my baggage, was suspicious of a little criminality in our connection; he, therefore, took it on himself to be very inquisitive about whom the girl was and whither we might be going. To ease his conscience I told him she was my wife's near relation,

whom I was conducting to her friends in the east, with whom she proposed residing in future. This account was satisfactory but my kinsman's preciseness was so unaccommodating that we bade him God bless him early in the morning, passed over to Belfast and took lodgings at a house, the only inhabitants of which were an elderly man, a young woman, her child which was an idiot, and lastly an Irishman, a transient person and whose occupation was that of a teacher or pedagogue. During the Irishman's stay at this house, he and the young woman above mentioned, had performed for each other the more essential duties of husband and wife without the intervention of the priesthood. I tarried here a number of days and on calculation found that since leaving home I had more than cleared all traveling expenses by medical and other casual emoluments.

One day, while at Belfast, I had been on a visit to a sick person and did not return to my lodgings till near bedtime. On entering the door I was met and accosted by the hostess herself, almost out of breath, who informed me (in a fit of jealousy no doubt) that my wife, as she called her, was locked up in the next room with the Irish schoolmaster; adding that in her opinion she was no better than she should be. I requested some explanation of this and was told that my informant, through a crevice, had peeped into their room where she beheld them very lovingly folded together in bed and by other palpable indications, was positive that they were furnishing my

brows with a pair of antlers, vulgarly called horns. Though my hostess did not express herself precisely in the terms above mentioned, yet such, in fact, were their plain import. I stood aghast for some minutes, stupid with surprise and without uttering a syllable. My feelings it would be difficult to describe, I shall therefore wave the attempt, and remark only that at last gaining utterance, my loud execrations so marred the sport of the loving couple that they abandoned their retirement in haste and sped to another apartment. I did not follow, but having now a recent instance of the infidelity of my mistress I was convinced beyond a doubt that lasciviousness was, indeed, her constitutional and incurable failing. For that reason I was resolved to place henceforth no manner of confidence in her delusive professions or fair speeches, repenting egregiously that I had been so unwise as to leave my own family and stroll about like a wandering Jew without a jacket, for her sake. I felt also a tincture of regret on reflecting that my fond expectations, my delightful dreams of happiness in her blithe society should be thus blown and dissipated forever. Though effusions of tenderness would sometimes arise I knew it behooved me to check them; for, however indelicate my own conduct, I could ill brook a partner whose person was at any man's disposal whom chance or design might fling in her way. In a word, I was vexed at the arrant folly I had shown in bringing upon my back this new load of dishonor, this unnecessary distress, by listening to the per-

suasions of a wanton, and longed for some casualty that should separate us, effectually, forever. But to forsake her in a strange land had been base and dishonorable; hence, my brain was puzzled in the choice of expedients; at last, however, I resolved to give up our settlement in the east, and to visit Coos or Canada.

This decree was communicated to my paragon of fidelity, but was far from obtaining her cordial acquiescence. I told her my resolutions were invincible; that I could not think of an established residence in this section of the country, though nothing but her own conduct could have altered my first purpose. "I was certainly disinclined, continued I, to be convinced of your libidinous propensity; but when I see "proof rife on proof, and still the last the strongest," I can no longer resist the evidence of my senses." As if touched with my reproaches, she seemed mightily overcome, burst into a flood of tears, and assumed all those airs of pretended contrition, which one class of women can command at pleasure. Though her efforts were assiduous to soothe me, my inquietude increased; I, therefore, hastened to defray my expenses at Belfast, and prosecuted our travels, till Canada received us into its rude yet friendly bosom.

In this new world we visited many parts and places, too tedious for enumeration. Growing weary, however, of Canada, as was natural to my removing disposition, we made a sudden roving to Tamworth, in New Hamp-

shire, subsisting very sprucely, the whole way, upon my professional earnings.

From Tamworth we came to Meredith, thirty miles; here I was readily recognized and saluted by the appellation of Dr. Tufts. This urged my abrupt departure, and Hanover was the next place, which, attracting our notice, invited a temporary sojournment. This is a neat, flourishing village, being the seat of Dartmouth university, the only collegial institution in the state, and as highly reputable as any one on the continent.

We took lodgings at the house of Mrs. Greene, purposing to abide there, for, at least, a week. Upon retrospect of our adventures, we here found that we had been absent from Lemington between four and five months; had seen divers parts of the country, and had traveled to the tune of one thousand miles. But should the frequent mention of such elaborate journeys dispose any to scruple the veracity of my journal, I would obviate all objections by observing, that I was well acquainted with the country, and enured, for many years, to much travel, and to great expedition in my routes; today, for instance, I might be in Lee or Canterbury perhaps, and by tomorrow, fifty or an hundred miles distant; this being considered, the seeming inconsistency of my account will, at once, vanish.

But to pursue the thread of my relation, which is now, to the great joy of the reader, perhaps, drawing to a close; our station at Mrs. Greene's proved so easy and agreeable, that we thought best to postpone removal, till

the waste of strength and spirits expended in those late wearisome rambles, should, in some measure, be repaired. One hundred and twenty miles from Lemington, we had not the slightest idea of being discovered or overtaken, by any of our offended kinsmen, which rendered us quite easy on that head. But our imagined security was fallacious, for exceedingly early, one morning, while I and my sprightly companion were still in bed, several men, armed with clubs, forced open the doors, and rushed into our apartment; among whom, dismal to relate! I distinguished the hateful features of my girl's father. His abrupt appearance, in our present condition, was a doleful surprise, as must be supposed, and an unutterable astonishment and mortification to us both. I hastily caught my apparel, and attempted to dress, but in this was frustrated by the old Grecian himself, who spying his daughter in bed, under circumstances so monstrous, broke forth into a most vehement passion, swearing outrageously, he would instantly have my life. This I had reason to believe, for, without giving me a moment for defense, he struck my arm with his club, and seemed stubbornly bent on pushing his threats against my life, into instant execution. My arm was totally disabled by the blow; but the rest of the mob, fearing the consequences of his vengeful frenzy, interposed with effect, and thus prevented the effusion of blood. However, they officiously loaned a hand for securing both the young woman and myself, and having fitted themselves for the scene in con-

templation by a cherishing glass, removed us both to a place of safe-keeping.

Thus was I caught as a bird in a gin; but in order to account for the unexpected appearance, at this juncture, of the girl's father, it will be necessary to retrograde a little, for the sake of noticing that one of those people, who happened to see and know me as I passed through Meredith, had occasion to travel toward the east. This man commenced his journey, just as I left Meredith, and passing through Lemington, he there saw and acquainted the girl's parents with my having been at Meredith, in company with a young woman, who, of course, must be their daughter.

On this news the old man mounted his nag, in a mighty bluster, and coming to Meredith, obtained such correct information, that he easily traced our route to Hanover, where he succeeded in making us both prisoners in the manner above noticed.

Our surly dictator first took us before a civil magistrate, which, in his plan, was a preparatory step to my being sent to jail; but the cautious justice disinclining to intermeddle with such odd kind of business, the old blunderbuss, my prosecutor, was baulked of his intention, and forced to abandon it. For the sake of revenge, however, he took possession of my valuable horse and baggage, then ordering his female truant to pack up her alls, they prepared, instantly, for home. With this injunction, terrified at his menaces, she refused to comply, while he, with the

fury of a bedlamite, protested go she should, dead or alive. At last, by force and arms, he made out to place her on horseback, and in this manner, with girl, horse and baggage, they set off from Hanover.

Although I felt no subordinate degree of humiliation at being circumstanced thus, and bereft of my mistress, in so imperious and triumphant a manner, and by a man too, whose capacity and experience I held in the utmost contempt; yet, after all, the loss of my horse and other effects constituted, in my mind, the grosser mischief, and more material injury. In truth, the exceptionable conduct of my lost female, from nearly the beginning of our connection, had proved a pretty strong antidote against the danger of inordinate partiality towards her person; but, to be left destitute of all earthly subsistence, and one hundred and twenty miles from home, was a subject not of mental regret only, but real embarrassment. To return to Lemington during the present hurricane, I deemed unadvisable; I therefore, made up my account to wander from house to house, and from place to place, in order, to pick up a casual subsistence by such paltry arts, as heretofore I had practiced so successfully. Thus intending, I left Hanover, and took a circuit through the country, scarcely caring whither; yet was unable to flee from the upbraidings of conscience, or to console myself for the blunders I had so madly committed. Go where, or into what company I would, still did cutting reflections, on the bitterness of impending ills, lacerate my bosom and

disturb its quiet. The image of an ill spent life, like the ghost of Banquo, haunted my imagination, incessantly, and tempted me to censure the malignity of destiny, when my employment had been far better in cultivating a belief, that I had merited those disgraces, in reconciling myself to the endurance of them, and in arming my mind against the future commission of crimes, such as had caused the present calamities.

Chapter VIII

ADVICE TO THE YOUNG

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light thro' chinks that time has made
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become,
As they draw near to their eternal home.

WALLER.

ROVING about till I thought the displeasure of my foes, and the rumor of my follies had a little subsided, I again ventured to show my head at Lemington, though much ashamed of my late scandalous elopement, and of the mode in which it had terminated. My chagrin was the more poignant, since I could not but know that my two sons, who were men of morals and account, and who possessed families of their own, would vastly disrelish my ill behavior, and withhold, perhaps, those necessary contributions, which, of a long time, I had been used to expect and receive at their hands. Thus inwardly teased, I approached with shame and distrust to that habitation, which I had abandoned so preposterously; and there found, within its walls, my old wife, who was assiduously engaged in domestic concernments, after her usual industrious manner. She was not a little astonished at my sudden appearance, nor was I, in a less degree, abashed

and confounded at her presence. To set up a justification, or even to extenuate my irregularities (during the present temper of my helpmate) seemed hardly to invite the experiment, I therefore attempted neither. Reproaches and revilings for conjugal infidelities issued in volleys, from her mellifluous notes, and became the order of the day, till the tempest of her passions was wrought up to the sublimest pitch of frenzy. It was manifest there could be no immediate calm; wherefore, it imported me to put on the whole armor of resignation, or quit the field, entirely, to my enraged antagonist.

Of the venerable dame, my spouse, it could only be said, "she was once young"; for with pretty large strides, she had now advanced towards her grand climacteric, being my elder by a number of years. As one would have supposed, it was high time for the old lady to exhibit a small portion of indifference for the hymeneal banquet, and to the indulgence of others in its delicacies; far otherwise; her juvenile feelings were not so forgotten, but she could view the itinerary, my capers and those of my female adventurer in the same odious point of vision, as though madam herself had been yet on the threshhold of twenty. Be this as it might, the multiplicity of curtain lectures, that were constantly chiming in my stunned ears, I had scarce thought pardonable in a newly wedded wanton of the age just mentioned. They reminded me of the old Welsh epigram, which, in a sense, may be appropos to our purpose;

"Women, like men, will fade away,
Their eyes grow dim, their teeth decay,
But while they breathe the vital gale,
'Tis strange their tongue should never fail."

How long ere those grating peals, had their vehemence been permanent as spiteful, must have put me to flight, is now problematical, since, before I was driven to that extremity, the torrent of her eloquence subsided, and left me to recover, by slow degrees, my ordinary standing in the family. In other words, after a deal of declamation, my considerate spouse, as in days of yore, repeatedly, so now, to prevent mischief, restored her contrite yokefellow to customary favors; of which, condescension and goodness, I hope to retain such lasting remembrance, as may in future deter me from provocations of a like filthy nature.

Since that period I have carried my dish pretty uprightly; have been guilty of few or no misdemeanors, but have persevered heroically in regular habits and virtuous resolutions. At times, however, I still budge about, as a traveling physician, in the hope of acquiring, in an honest line, if possible, a few pennyworths of bread, a meager, but needful pittance, to aid me to the goal of life's painful pilgrimage. By endeavoring to advance the benefit of my fellow creatures, and do all the good I can, I hope to make some little atonement, in the latter part of my life, for the many mischiefs and evils, which I brought upon myself, my family and others, in the earlier stages of it. . . .

Should any of the rising generation, by a perusal of my story, learn to avoid those quicksands of vice, on which I have been so often wrecked, I shall feel myself amply compensated for the trouble I have taken in its compilation. "The wages of sin is death"; the wages of a vicious, dissolute life is punishment. That punishment, if not inflicted by the ministers of the law, is still our certain doom, by the invisible hand of inexorable justice. My iniquities have been regularly visited with pain, poverty and stripes; the examples, therefore, are full of moral, and teach, beyond a doubt, that our actions, to insure happiness, must be good; the contrary of which my own life most abundantly demonstrates. To hold up to view the monster sin, in his odious and abominable colors, must, and ever will, have a similar effect with, if not a more powerful one, than the picture of virtue arrayed in all her alluring and attractive charms. There is, therefore, a positive and negative example; each in its tendency having the same effect upon the lives and morals of society. That my history is of the negative kind I need not inform the curious reader; since, indeed, I have taught virtue, by the practice of vice only, throughout a troublesome life. The lines of the greatest of poets will here illustrate my ideas.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
That to be hated needs but to be seen."

Before concluding, I beg leave renewedly to acknowledge the numberless obligations I owe to diverse gentle-

men and ladies, for their disinterested kindness to me, both while under condemnation of death, and while at the castle, as also in many other of my trials and exigencies, as well before as after those periods. That they may be rewarded for their beneficence, both in this world, and in that which is to come, will be an object of my earnest entreaties. In respect to such as have injured me I heartily forgive them, as I hope the supreme arbiter of events and judge of all things will vouchsafe to forgive me. I wish not to harbor resentment, and am determined to carry rancor against no one, in my bosom to the grave. I hope too that others will overlook the injuries they have sustained in the loss of property, or otherwise, through my means; inasmuch as I lament sincerely my injustice towards them, resolving, carefully, to shun similar aggressions for the future. Heaven grant I may do no more wickedly.

FINIS

THE SIX SILVER SPOONS

A Note by the Editor

THE SIX SILVER SPOONS

The incident of the six spoons, which brought Tufts within the shadow of the rope, was naturally regarded by him as the climax of his career. And it may be that here alone it is possible to reconstruct one of his stories from authentic contemporary records, and to compare it with the version given in this book, thirteen years later, by his unknown biographer.

For once, at least, Tufts came before a Court of sufficient importance to leave records; and for once he was so much a public character as to merit a few lines in a newspaper. The press was chiefly concerned with the French Revolution, and decidedly contemptuous toward local news. At this time, and for many years after, newspaper editors either thought it undignified to record local events; or else they considered such news unnecessary to print, since every citizen heard all he wished by word of mouth.

The year of the adventure with the spoons is given throughout Tufts' book as 1793, and this error was not detected by Colonel Higginson; nor by me, when writing a chapter on Tufts in my *Queer Books*. The actual date was 1794, and some account of Henry Tufts' conflict with the law is preserved in the records of the Supreme Court in Boston; and in the Executive Records of the Council, in the Massachusetts State House.

Tufts is not usually reticent about his illegal acts, but for some reason he chose to represent his six months in Marblehead as a peaceful and idyllic period, in which he attended to his "appropriate functions" as a "pharmacopolist," and cleared what was, for that date, the very good sum of three dollars a day.

The picture of the benevolent physician from New Hampshire, equipped with his Indian lore, bringing joy and healing to the people of Massachusetts is a pleasing one. Unfortunately, he gave them cause for grave annoyance by his activity after dark. Like Charley Peace, and many another burglar, he had, or appeared to have, a respectable occupation for the day-time.

As early as January 9, 1794, (by the records of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court) Tufts, and one William Venson, passed on some unsuspecting persons in Boston "a certain piece of base metal commonly called a counter, made in imitation of coined money," which the said Tufts and Venson represented as a genuine gold coin of the United States.

At the February term of the Court, in Boston, the two adventurers were indicted on two counts, for this offense. Both pleaded not guilty, but Tufts later changed his plea to guilty. Venson was acquitted on one indictment, but convicted on the other. Each defendant received the same sentence: costs of the prosecution, one hour in the pillory, and fifteen strokes on the naked back.

After this, we are to suppose, Tufts returned to Marble-

head and took up the medical profession again, "visiting many patients . . . both . . . high and low."

In Massachusetts, the anniversary of Concord Fight, and of the "Battle" of Lexington, April 19th, is always observed with appropriate ceremonies. It is a pleasant spring holiday,—remembered by most of us as the opening of the baseball season. To our ancestors, in 1794, when the veterans of that glorious morning in 1775 were still living, it may have had a more sacred significance. Nevertheless, on the eve of that holiday, Dr. Tufts went to Ipswich, where, after night-fall, he broke into, entered, and stole from the shop of Isaac Lane, nine raccoon skins, of the value of fifty-four shillings, six hats of the value of sixty-seven shillings, and two cat-skins valued at two shillings.

Moreover, he committed burglary in two shoe-making shops, belonging to Benjamin Appleton at Hamilton, where he filched one shoe of the value of four shillings, and leather worth six shillings. Likewise, the same night, (he must have had a good horse) he went to the shop of John Dodge at Wenham, where he stole two pairs of boot-legs, two calf skins, and a piece of leather, of the total value of forty-two shillings.

At the June term of the Supreme Court, sitting in Ipswich, (the same session at which the case of the spoons was tried) Tufts was charged with all three of these offenses,—and to all of them he pleaded *guilty*.

There is no mention of this in the book, and from

Tufts' account, one would have supposed that what he calls the false accusation about the spoons was the only cause for his appearance in the Court at Ipswich.

Here, however, in all the terrors of legal phraseology, is the accusation made against him, by the Grand Jurors, the matter of Mr. Jacobs' spoons:

At the Supreme Judicial Court begun and held at Ipswich within and for the County of Essex on the third Tuesday of June in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

The Jurors for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on their oath present that Henry Tufts of Marblehead in the County of Essex, yeoman, at Danvers in the said County of Essex with force and arms on the twenty-fourth day of April now last past, not having the fear of God before his eyes but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil, the dwelling house of Daniel Jacobs situate in Danvers aforesaid in the County aforesaid in the night time of the said twenty-fourth day of April feloniously and burglariously did break and enter with an intent to steal and seven silver spoons of the value of eighteen shillings one iron spoon of the value of one shilling one washed beer glass of the value of two shillings one beaver hat of the value of twelve shillings one walking staff of the value of five shillings two pairs of leather slippers of the value of eight shillings and one pair of shoes of the value of six shillings of the goods and chattels of the said Daniel Jacobs there found then and there feloniously did steal take & carry away against the peace and dignity of the said Commonwealth & the Law in such case made and provided.

A true bill: EPHRAIM KENDALL, *Foreman*
JAS. SULLIVAN, *Attorney General*

Tufts' narrative of his innocent bargain, with John Stewart, fades away, and we have, in its place, the more

interesting picture of his departure from Danvers, with eight spoons (one of iron) to say nothing of the beaver hat, the walking staff, the slippers and the "washed beer glass."

On this charge, Tufts maintained his guiltlessness, and chose to stand trial. Here again, is the brief official record:

And now in this present term before the Court here comes the said Henry Tufts under the custody of the Sheriff of the County of Essex and being set to the bar here in his proper person and forth-with being demanded of and concerning the premises in the Indictment above specified, and charged upon him how he will acquit himself thereof he says that thereof he is not guilty and thereof for trial puts himself upon God and the Country.

Nathan Dane and Samuel Sewall Esqrs, having been assigned by the Court as Counsel for the prisoner. A jury is immediately impanelled viz: John Huse, foreman and fellows namely, Aaron Smith, Joseph Osgood, Richard Woodman, Benjamin Townes, Jacob Treadwell, John Thurston, Aaron Nelson, Enoch Hoyt, Ebenezer Farrington Junr, Jonathan Kimball & David Wood, who being sworn to speak the truth of and concerning the premises in the said Indictment upon their oath say that the said Henry Tufts is guilty.

And now a motion is made by the Attorney General in behalf of the Commonwealth that sentence of death may be passed against the said Henry Tufts the prisoner at the bar, whereupon it is demanded of him the said Henry Tufts if he has or knows ought to say, wherefore the Justices here ought not upon the premises and verdict aforesaid to proceed to pass judgment against him who nothing further says unless as he before had said.

IT IS THEREFORE CONSIDERED BY THE COURT here that the said Henry Tufts be taken to the Gaol from whence he

came and from thence to the place of execution and there be hanged by the neck until he be dead.

This clears up a few points. He had asked, says Tufts, for Theophilus Parsons as counsel. Mr. Parsons was the leader of the Essex bar, and the prisoner was demanding the best talent. Instead, he was assigned Nathan Dane and Samuel Sewall, Esqrs. Colonel Higginson thought that Tufts, who described them as "Messrs. Sewall and *Dana*" referred to James Sewall of Marblehead, afterwards Member of Congress, and Francis Dana, "afterwards Chief Justice."

As a matter of fact, Francis Dana *was* Chief Justice at this time. Samuel Sewall (1757-1814) was in Congress from 1797-1800, and was later a judge of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Nathan Dane (1752-1835) lives in memory as the founder of the Dane professorship of law at Harvard. Henry Tufts' interests were in able hands.

Justice Paine, mentioned by Tufts, was Robert Treat Paine (1731-1814) the Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

As for the trial itself, the Tufts account is naturally the more interesting. His statement that the Attorney General (James Sullivan, 1744-1808; Attorney General of Massachusetts, 1790-1807) treated him with "tenderness" and that the Judge warned the jury to be cautious about convicting, is probably true.

Aside from the fact that a convict is more apt to charge

with harshness the Court which has convicted him, than to admit that they gave him fair treatment, there is another reason for believing Tufts' account of the long hesitation of the jury. (It is also referred to in the joint petition of Tufts and Abigail. This petition, plainly, was written by a responsible person.)

The reason for believing this part of Tufts' story lies in a reference to another similar trial, held probably in the neighboring town of Salem, and in the same year. It is recorded in the *Diary of William Bentley, D. D.*, under date of November 10, 1794. The State's attorney was James Sullivan, Esq., as in Tufts' case, and again Messrs. Sewall and Dane appeared for the two prisoners, who also were charged with burglary. The jury were out all night, but although the evidence was clear that the offense was committed in the hours of darkness, and therefore came under the law against *burglary*, they could not be persuaded to find the men guilty of that crime, as it called for the death penalty,—"so firm," writes Dr. Bentley, "are the people against sanguinary laws."

Therefore, they brought in the prisoners guilty of the lesser offense of theft.

In Tufts' case, because of the capital sentence imposed for the burglary in Danvers, he was not called for sentence in the three other cases in which he pleaded guilty. And the sentence in the Danvers case may be explained by the fact that his record persuaded the judges that he was a confirmed and dangerous criminal.

We must try to see him as they did,—not as a rather amusing person, going long distances at night, and breaking into buildings to steal nine raccoon skins and a beaver hat. Our ancestors had not yet become jaded and accustomed to crime on a grand scale. We hardly remember it over night if we read in a newspaper of a robbery in broad daylight of tens of thousands of dollars, accompanied by the casual murder of guards or policemen, and an incidental spraying with bullets of all the bystanders,—women and children included. The only effect such an occurrence has on us, in the event of a trial of some of the robbers, is to make us insist that the bandits have a staff of psychiatrists to show that they really were not to blame for what they did.

Incidentally, the record of the Tufts trial shows that not two witnesses alone appeared against him, but about a dozen, including several members of the family of Daniel Jacobs. A police official of today, would, I think, conclude that the only reason Tufts risked trial in the Jacobs case was that he thought that it was the only one he could "beat."

Next came the appeals to the Governor for clemency. The petitions of the students of Cambridge and of the ladies of Ipswich do not appear to be on file at present, but the petition of Tufts himself, (see page 268) the joint appeal of himself and his wife, "dear Nabby," and two petitions of Mr. John Thurston, the juror, are all in existence. In Tufts' own appeal we seem to have an auto-

rights of neutrality: That insurrection has begun in Poland against the usurpations of Russia and Prussia: And that (happily for the American commerce) the war between the Portuguese and Algerines is renewed.

CIRCUIT COURT of the U. S.

On Monday last week, came on the trial of COLLINS, POLESKI, and FASTIDI, in Boston, for murder and piracy, as mentioned in former papers, when the Jury brought in their verdict—Guilty. Their execution is ordered for Wednesday the 30th day of July next.

At the Supreme Judicial Court, held at Ipswich, last week, HENRY TUFTS, late a resident in Marblehead, convicted of burglary on the house of Mr. Daniel Jacobs, in Danvers, received sentence of Death.

Two men were also convicted of passing counterfeit dollars, and received sentence.—They were from Kennebeck.

On Wednesday last, arrived at *Gloucester* the schooner Freedom, Edmund Pearson, master, from Guadaloupe; in which came passengers six French Officers, viz. Charles Baujean, Moses Baujean, Arman Beaujean, John Capedeville, Philip Redaud, John B Laveau—who were compelled to embark for America, and obliged to leave their wives and children with the enemy, the English, or, what if possible is worse, with the aristocrats of the Island. They were received by the patriotic inhabitants of *Gloucester* with that sympatnetic affection which we hope will ever distinguith them; and on Friday invited to a civic feast, at which were present the principal persons of the place; when festive toasts were drank, among which were the following:—The Republic of France. [*three cheers.*]—The memory of those heroes who have fallen, whether in France or America, in the defence of the rights of men. [*After this toast, the French Gentlemen sung the Marseillois Hymn.*]—May America ever be found a happy and safe asylum to every unfortunate French Republican.—Mr. JAY, the Plenipotentiary to the court of Britain—may his embassy be crowned with success.—The Fishery of Massachusetts.—Speedy relief to our unfortunate brethren in slavery in Algiers.—Mankind—May we live to see universal Liberty and philanthropy pervade the mighty family.

DIED]—In England, the Rt. Hon. Charles Pratt (Lord Camden) aged 63. In Flanders, Capt. Carlton, son of Lord Dorchester: in the action of the 17th of April, a cannon ball cut his arm in two, another

the Governor, at his
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public curiosity is gr
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came up and moored
Island, agreeably to
with 7 others which
Adm. Jervis's squad
this squadron of 9 s

District of

Sch. Betsey,
Olive Branch,
Patty,

Ship Wm. & Henry,
Bark Essex,
Brig Francis,
Katy,
Polly,
Lion,
Success,
Sch. Seaflower,
Nancy,
Molly,
Betsey,
John,
John & Mary,
Patty,
Betsey,
Three Friends,
Polly,

Sales

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tons, Hair Ribbons,
Silk Handkerchiefs,
Paper, &c.——*Al*
Pans, Case Knives
Sickles, Gridirons,
Latches, Cod and
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From *The Salem Gazette*, June 24th, 1794, announcing the sentence on Henry Tufts

graph document signed by the man himself, and a sample of his literary style at this period of his life. As well as I can decipher it, this is his letter to the old Revolutionary patriot, then Governor of Massachusetts:

To most oneribel gouener of Boston this comes from a pore condamd man and i am not the contriver of the Burglay for John Simson went him self and did the Crime he bored my shoos and said he wanted to goe a litle way and he wold bee back next morning and soo he did come to me in marblhead and said he have got som things as good to you as the money and you must sall me your cote and thes things is as god as money to you and i sold him one cote and too pare of Stockings as Shore as i am alive this is true and the Sheriff [?] that i sent after my evidence was my Inimy and said he wold doe me hurt if he cold unles i Bege the power [?] your oner So doe all you can for me now and the Counsler to do for me pray do for me if you wold as god you never wold consent for me to die i am pore and distut [destitute] of friends and nobody but god for me to help me now as [I am?] in the hands of god I hop that god will sufer me to live a litle longer to repent of my sins and trangrasons that i have comit in the Body may god in liten your oners of my afairs now at this time and let me live a little longer for repentence.

HENRY TUFTS.

It is endorsed, on the outside,

To The most onerible gouvner of Boston with Cear [care] and Spead.

There is in this, it will be observed, no mention of the sinister John Stewart, seller of the six abhorred silver spoons. In his place, appears a new character: "John

Simson," whose transactions with Tufts do involve a coat and two pair of stockings, but are otherwise somewhat different from those printed in his story, and a little less suggestive of complete innocence.

As for the intolerable suspense of the afternoon of August 14th; the inhuman silence of Governor Samuel Adams; the dreadful wait of more than a month longer; and the news of the commutation, coming at last on the 18th of September—all of them described in the book—the records show that on June 27th the Governor was advised by the Council to issue a warrant for the execution on August 14th, and that on that day he did so issue it (See page 280) The *Salem Gazette,* of July 1st, announced the day set for the hanging.

On *July 17th,* however, the Governor issued a reprieve, until September 25th. Plainly, Governor and Council were investigating the question of a commutation, and on September 2nd they commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. (Tufts actually served four years,—the longest term of imprisonment in his life.)

What becomes of the sexton, going on August 14th, at 8 A. M., to dig the grave? And the coffin that put the school-mistress in a tremor? And the sympathetic deputy sheriffs? And the three thousand persons of Ipswich, and roundabout, who came to see a hanging, and had to go home in bitter disappointment?

Are we to think that Governor Adams—who was over seventy years old, and should have been past such pranks

—was playing a joke on all these people, by failing to let the Sheriff of Essex know that *four weeks earlier* he had postponed the ceremony until late the next month, and had almost determined to forbid it altogether?

I detest the iconoclast, the shatterer of myths, the pedant who takes joy in exploding harmless and enjoyable legends. There is a large percentage of truth in the narrative of Henry Tufts,—how large we do not know. But it is possible that he so respected the truth that he looked upon it in awe: as something to be dealt out with caution, and not unless both diluted and adorned.

After some study of his career, at various times for more than a year past, I have been impressed with the difficulty of discovering him at all, outside the brown leather covers of his old book. Often, he has appeared to me as a wraith, a person everyone talks about—like the Devil—but never actually sees.

At last, one day, after a dozen failures, I opened the pages of the *Salem Gazette*, and found the record of his conviction,—probably the first time that Henry Tufts ever got his name in the papers. And when, on the same page, only five lines below, I read that the schooner *Freedom,* Edmund Pearson, master, had arrived at Gloucester, I took it for an omen. If I doubted the existence of one of these, why should I not doubt the existence of both?

E. P.

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